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NOTICE: FBIS wishes to advise that resource constraints will compel discontinuation of the Middle East and South Asia Review effective 1 April.

[Editorial Report]

Lebanon

Israeli Air Raid—The Israeli Air Force attacked bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) in the Al-Biqa' Valley 20 March, Jerusalem radio announced. All planes returned safely after hitting their targets northeast of Zahlah. AFP cited reports that the attack destroyed three PFLP-GC bases near Barr Ilyas and Riyaq, killing at least 6 PFLP-GC members and wounding 19. Syrian and Palestinian anti-aircraft gunners fired at the attacking planes, the agency noted.

Artillery Exchanges—In a statement broadcast by Voice of Lebanon radio 20 March, the Army Command in East Beirut announced that its forces were returning fire in response to continual bombardments from artillery emplacements in areas controlled by Syrian forces. The attacks caused several casualties in the Lebanese Army and among civilians in the Christian sector. The Lebanese Army did not respond to earlier artillery attacks over the weekend, according to the radio. The clandestine Radio Free Lebanon confirmed the upsurge of fighting on 20 March, noting that violent clashes were taking place and that Beirut airport was under fire.

As for the results of the 17 March car bomb in East Beirut, Radio Free Lebanon said the final casualty estimate is 13 people dead and over 100 wounded. The British Foreign Office downplayed suggestions that the British Embassy was the intended target, London PRESS ASSOCIATION noted.

Israel

Attack on IDF—An Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldier was killed and another wounded when their patrol was ambushed by two terrorists in the 'Arava border area near Jordan 17 March, Jerusalem radio announced. The attackers escaped across the border but were arrested by the Jordanian authorities, the radio noted. A Jordanian military source cited by PETRA-JNA confirmed the capture of the two men and said they were being interrogated.

Commenting on the incident in remarks carried by Jerusalem radio, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin stressed Jordan's responsibility for preventing cross-border terrorist attacks, and he said Jordan must ensure it is in control of its own territory to prevent these kind of activities. Finance Minister Shim'on Peres likewise said Israel expects Jordan to punish those involved in the attack, the radio noted.

Both Colonel Sa'id Musa's Fatah Provisional Command and the Palestine Liberation Front claimed responsibility for the operation, according to Radio Monte Carlo. IRNA reported that Col Musa has threatened to use force to obtain the release of the two Palestinians arrested by the Jordanian authorities.

Violence in Territories—Jerusalem radio reported that seven Arabs were killed in clashes with border policemen and IDF soldiers over the weekend. Most of the violence took place in the Gaza Strip, where at least 37 Palestinians were wounded in clashes on 18 March, according to THE JERUSALEM POST. In one of the incidents, three border policemen were stabbed before they shot dead a Palestinian assailant, Jerusalem radio disclosed. The radio noted that a curfew was subsequently imposed on all the refugee camps in Gaza.

In the West Bank, two Palestinian boys aged 12 and 14 were killed by IDF gunfire during a demonstration in the Janin district, according to the radio.

Coalition Future—In remarks broadcast by Jerusalem radio 20 March, Shim'on Peres warned that if the coalition fails to formulate a "joint solution" to the peace process in the coming months it will face a "historic choice." The radio viewed this as a hint that the Labor Party may have to pull out of the government.

PLO Affairs

Senior Palestinian sources cited by a Kuwaiti paper stated that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will be in the Palestinian delegation that will hold talks with U.S. Ambassador Robert Pelletreau in Tunis 22 March, INA reported. In Hungary over the weekend, 'Arafat said it is "promising" that a "shift" in U.S. Mideast policy is taking place, according to MTI.

On the PLO's stance at the upcoming talks with U.S. officials, Kuwait's AL-QABAS reported that the Palestinians will try to ascertain the U.S. view on an international peace conference and on PLO participation in it. According to the paper, which cited "high-ranking" Palestinian sources, the PLO will also express its readiness to hold talks with Israeli officials "in any place and at any time," though it believes such talks must be a prelude to an international conference. The PLO believes that any agreement over the West Bank and Gaza must be the first stage of the settlement of the Palestinian problem as a whole, and it will reaffirm the PLO's adherence to the right of Palestinians in the Arab countries and elsewhere to repatriation and compensation for the land lost in 1948. The PLO will also insist that the intifadah (uprising) can only stop if sincere peace negotiations are begun and it will call on the U.S. Administration to differentiate between terrorist operations and legitimate resistance against occupation.

'Arafat's adviser Bassam Abu Sharif commented on the PLO-U.S. dialogue in an interview with Radio Monte Carlo, predicting that it will become "more firmly entrenched" over time and will not remain "restricted to one channel." While noting that the "major" issue in the upcoming session will be the international conference, Abu Sharif indicated that the PLO is also interested in concluding a cease-fire agreement between Israel and the Palestinians in southern Lebanon. As for the recent talks between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and various Palestinian leaders from the occupied territories, Abu Sharif stressed that the Palestinian nationalist figures who were "summoned" to the meeting are known to the PLO and all of them have informed the PLO of its results.

In contrast, the clandestine Al-Quds radio broadcast a sharp attack on the seven Palestinians who attended the "meeting of relinquishment," naming those involved and stating that they should be punished.

Iraq

Iraq has surface-to-surface missiles capable of hitting "vital targets" in Tel Aviv, according to the Iraqi ambassador in Manama cited by Beirut's Voice of Lebanon radio. The ambassador added that the missiles are intended to "deter" Israel from imposing its authority on the Arab states.

Egypt

In a 20 March speech broadcast by Cairo radio, President Husni Mubarak expressed "satisfaction" that the new U.S. Administration has shown interest in reactivating the U.S. role in the peace process, adding that this increases the possibilities of making tangible progress toward peace in the coming months. Egypt's contacts with both superpowers show that they realize the importance of moving without delay to prepare for peace negotiations within the framework of an international conference, Mubarak said, and Israel should not be afraid of such a conference.

In earlier remarks reported by MENA, Mubarak asserted that an international conference will be a "pyschological umbrella" under which direct talks can start, and he told Israelis not to fear peace and negotiations because "no one will impose anything on anyone."

Syrian Leader's Tour

President Hafiz al-Asad returned to Syria 19 March after visiting Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia for talks aimed at enhancing the Arab stand in "confronting hostile schemes," Damascus television reported. During his tour, Al-Asad held three meetings with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in Banghazi, two meetings with President Chadli Bendjedid in Algiers, and one meeting with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunis, Damascus radio noted.

Maghreb Affairs

Algeria—A Religious Affairs Ministry statement broadcast by Algiers radio indicated that the authorities have rejected a request by the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF) to open offices in two Algiers mosques. Warning the ISF and other Muslim groups that the holiness of mosques is "incompatible with any kind of political activity," the statement stressed that mosques must only be used for worship and cannot be turned into centers or offices by any organization, whether political or nonpolitical, apart from the religious societies which build and administer the mosques.

Tunisia—President Ben Ali marked the anniversary of independence by authorizing the pardon of 1,246 people who were imprisoned for disturbing public order, Tunis radio noted.

Sudan

Political Developments—The State Council has decided to set up a "high committee" comprising representatives of the Armed Forces, the State Council, and the prime minister to implement the recent Armed Forces memorandum on solving the political crisis, according to a newspaper report cited by SUNA.

An announcement on the formation of the new government is expected 21 March, following an agreement between the Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to resolve "minor disagreements" on the allocation of ministerial posts, SUNA reported. Meanwhile, Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi issued a statement 19 March declaring that relations between the Ummah Party and the DUP are "good" and that delays in forming the new government are "due to a concern to set up an administration satisfying all Sudanese people," according to AFP.

In another development, Al-Mahdi announced his approval of the peace agreement reached between the DUP and the southern rebels last November, Cairo radio reported, adding that Al-Mahdi will contact the rebels after his new government has been formed.

Southern Military Situation—The Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) captured the garrison town of Mongalla 17 March after "heavy fighting," the clandestine SPLA radio reported.

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Candidacy—The Society of Combatant Clergymen has chosen Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani as its candidate in the presidential election this summer, IRNA reported.

ICO Conference Outcome—The Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) statement branding Salman Rushdie as an "apostate" was a "confirmation" of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni's religious edict against Rushdie, Tehran radio contended. The radio said the ICO has now adopted a "proper stand" on the issue, noting that some world media have interpreted this as a "major victory" for Iran.

Relations With USSR—Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hoseyn Lavasani's talks with Soviet officials during his 16-18 March visit to the USSR focused on Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq conflict, other international problems, and bilateral relations, TASS reported. Lavasani's talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze were held in a "frank" atmosphere, TASS noted, and Lavasani conveyed a message from 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Iran's foreign minister.

In another development, Moscow television broadcast a Soviet commentator's view that Ayatollah Khomeyni's religious edict on Rushdie is "barbaric" and "an affront to every civilized human being."

Iran-Iraq Issue—In a message to the UN secretary general cited by IRNA, Velayati dismissed Iraqi proposals for a POW exchange, reaffirming that Iran is only willing to exchange POW's in accordance with Resolution 598—after the withdrawal of Iraqi forces to the international border.

Afghanistan

The ICO decision to allocate Afghanistan's seat in the organization to the "puppet government" can only result in the continuation of war and fratricide, according to a Foreign Ministry statement broadcast by Kabul radio 17 March. The statement declared that Afghanistan "strongly denounces" the decision and regards it as "void." However, Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the mujahidin interim government, lauded the decision as "tantamount to the unanimous recognition" of his government, according to Islamabad radio.

Two Pakistani "spies" took part in a 19 March press conference broadcast by Kabul radio in which they admitted their connection with Pakistan's Central Intelligence Department. They alleged that Pakistan has assigned "around 400 intelligence officers" to the Qandahar and Spin Buldak areas tasked with organizing military operations, gathering intelligence information, and supervising narcotics smuggling into Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, a Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman cited by Islamabad radio "regretted" recent Soviet allegations that Pakistani troops are fighting on Afghan territory. The spokesman described the allegations as "totally without foundation."

The mujahidin "foiled" another attempt by the Kabul regime to reinforce its troops in Jalalabad by delaying an Army convoy at a point 60 km from Jalalabad, Islamabad radio reported. The radio added that the mujahidin "broke through" a strategic cordon at Jalalabad airport and also captured eight other military posts around the city. The government in Kabul has asked the citizens of Jalalabad to evacuate the city due to "increased pressure" by the mujahidin, the radio noted. The radio also reported that two Soviet Scud missiles were fired from Kabul toward Jalalabad but caused no damage.

Pakistan

Eight people were killed during violence between rival ethnic groups in Karachi 17 March, according to a Karachi police statement cited by Islamabad radio. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto told journalists at Karachi airport that the "recent regrettable incidents" in the province are part of a "well-thought out plan" to disrupt law and order, the radio reported.

Islamic Affairs

ICO Conference Issues 'Final Statement'

LD1703104589 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2045 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the 18th Islamic foreign ministers conference, and his excellency the secretary general of the ICO, Dr Hamid al-Ghabid, held a news conference this evening at the conference media center headquarters at the Al-Riyadh Hotel.

At the beginning of the news conference, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said: I have no remarks to make or priorities. You have attended the open final session.

His highness noted that the final statement reflects the debates which took place at the general assembly of the conference, the discussions which took place at the meetings of the specialized committees, and the resolutions adopted by the conference concerning the issues discussed by the specialized committees.

His highness then gave the floor to his excellency the ICO secretary general, who read the statement.

Here is the text of the final statement:

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate,

The final communique of the 18th Islamic foreign ministers conference, held in Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the period 13-16 March 1989:

The 18th Islamic foreign ministers conference was held in Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the period 13-16 March 1989 under the chairmanship of King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, with the participation of the following member states:

A. Participants
1. The Jordanian Hashemite Kingdom
2. The United Arab Emirates
3. The Republic of Indonesia
4. The Republic of Uganda
5. The Islamic Republic of Iran
6. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan
7. The State of Bahrain
8. Brunei Darussalam
9. Burkina Faso
10. The People's Republic of Bangladesh
11. The People's Republic of Benin
12. The Republic of Turkey
13. The Republic of Chad
14. The Republic of Tunisia
15. The Republic of Gabon
16. The Republic of Gambia
17. The Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria
18. The Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros
19. The Republic of Djibouti
20. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
21. The Republic of Senegal
22. The Republic of Sudan
23. The Syrian Arab Republic
24. The Republic of Sierra Leone
25. The Somali Democratic Republic
26. The Republic of Iraq
27. The Sultanate of Oman
28. The Republic of Guinea
29. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau
30. The State of Palestine
31. The State of Qatar
32. The Republic of Cameroon
33. The State of Kuwait
34. The Republic of Lebanon
35. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah
36. The Republic of Maldives
37. The Republic of Mali
38. Malaysia
39. The Arab Republic of Egypt
40. The Kingdom of Morocco
41. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania
42. The Republic of Niger
43. The Federal Republic of Nigeria
44. The Yemen Arab Republic
45. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

The following bodies affiliated to the Islamic Conference Organization attended the meeting:

Research Center of Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul

Center for Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training in Islamic States, Ankara

Islamic Center for Artistic and Vocational Training and Research, Dhaka

Islamic Center for the Development of Trade, Casablanca

Islamic Institution for Science, Technology and Development, Jeddah

Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence, Jeddah

International Committee for the Preservation of Islamic Heritage, Istanbul

Present at the conference as observers:
1. Turkish-Cypriot Community [as received]
2. National Front for the Liberation of Moro

B. The following bodies emanating from the Islamic Conference Organization were also present:
1. Islamic Development Bank
2. Islamic Organization for Education, Sciences and Culture
3. Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and the Exchange of Goods
4. International Islamic News Agency
5. Organization of Broadcasting Stations in Islamic States
6. Organization of Islamic Capitals and Towns
7. Standing Committee of the Islamic Solidarity Fund
8. Sports Committee of Islamic Solidarity Competitions

9. Union of International Arab and Islamic Schools

C. The following Islamic institutions and associations were also present:
1. The Islamic World League
2. League of Islamic Universities
3. World Islamic Call Society
4. International Union of Islamic Banks
5. European Islamic Council
6. Islamic Committee of the International Crescent
7. The Islamic World Conference

D. The following international organizations were also present:
1. United Nations Organization
2. Nonaligned Movement
3. The Arab League
4. UN High Commission for Refugees
5. UN Committee for the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of Palestinian people
6. International Governmental Committee for the Fight Against Drought in the Sahel

E. The following guests attended:
1. Afghan mujahidin
2. Gulf Cooperation Council

2. [figure as received] The conference and opened by King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques. In his opening speech he welcomed the delegations taking part, expressed the pride of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in hosting this gathering, and wished the conference success in its work. He also hoped that the conference would embody the Islamic solidarity and fraternity in the various joint Islamic work aspects and its institutions.

The custodian of the two holy mosques explained in his speech that Islamic solidarity is the true solidarity, because it emanates from the book of God and the teachings of His Prophet—may the blessing and peace of God be upon him. It is the solid base from which the Muslims go forth to the far corners of the earth in pursuit of their faith and livelihood. The basic prop for Islamic solidarity and fraternity is the ICO and its institutions which operate within its framework. The ICO is the institution that brings the Islamic nations and states together and embodies their vigilant presence in confronting the challenges in various aspects of life by adopting solutions that are inspired by our tolerant Islamic shari'ah.

The conference adopted the speech of the custodian of the two holy mosques as an official conference document.

The foreign ministers of Bangladesh, Uganda, and Tunisia, on behalf of member states from Asia and Africa and the Arab world, successively expressed their gratitude and thanks to the custodian of King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the two holy mosques, for honoring the conference with his presence and for his speech, which inspired noble thoughts.

His Excellency Marwan al-Qasim, the Jordanian foreign minister, in his capacity as the chairman of the 17th Islamic foreign ministers conference, expressed gratitude to the custodian of the two holy mosques, and he conveyed to the conference the greetings of His Majesty King Husayn and Jordan—the government and people. He said that the past 12 months witnessed important developments in the Islamic world such as the Palestinian issue, the situation between Iraq and Iran, Afghanistan, and other fields. He expressed hope that solutions to the other problems would be reached.

6. [figure as received] Dr Ahmad al-Ghabid was sworn in as the (?new secretary general) of the ICO.

7. He made a speech expressing thanks to King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and the government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their genuine mutual affection toward upholding the standing of Islam and the prosperity of the Islamic nation. He also expressed pride in the patronage of the custodian of the two holy mosques of the conference, and also the attention the conference received from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in ensuring the success of the conference. The secretary general noted that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been and still is the axis of the Islamic world. It contains the holy places, which are very dear to the hearts all Muslims. He also noted the genuine efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with relentless zeal under the wise leadership of the custodian of the two holy mosques, to strengthen Muslim solidarity. He also noted its support for the Islamic causes, its commitment to the aims of our organization's charter, its generous financial support, and its continuous efforts to spread peace and realize amity among all Muslims. All these deserve the appreciation of the Islamic world and its appreciation for the facilities the Kingdom has provided pilgrims and others who come to the holy places. In his comprehensive speech, the secretary general also referred to current developments in the international arena and their influence on Islamic states. He explained the basic role of the ICO in strengthening the ties of cooperation while implementing the strategies and resolutions of the Islamic conferences by the member states.

The secretary general also noted that the international situation is witnessing deep changes. As an example, he pointed to what had been realized in the field of East-West relations, where golden opportunities have been provided for anchoring peace and security at various international and regional levels. He also gave as an example the opportunities which had been missed for establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, particularly the peace plan announced by the Palestinian leadership following the PNC announcement of the emergence of the Palestinian state in the shadow of the escalating uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied areas. This uprising has been an important turning point in creating a greater awareness of the tragic suffering of the Palestinian people under the yoke of the tyrannical forces of Israeli occupation. It has led to a broader understanding of the need to attain their inalienable national rights.

In addition to what has been achieved in Afghanistan—the complete withdrawal of Soviet forces and the setting up of the provisional government of the Afghan people—there have been other achievements. These include the cease fire between Iran and Iraq in accordance with the UN Resolution 598, the relaxation which has taken place in Namibia, and the latter's independence in April 1989—a matter which was described by the ICO secretary general as a triumph which would consolidate the forces of freedom and justice in Africa. The ICO secretary general asserted, in this respect, that the ICO will continue its full support for the liberation movements in Africa. He said that the ICO will continue to protect the rights of Islamic societies in countries which are not members of the ICO so they may protect their Islamic identity, and practice their religious and other rights on an equal footing with the other citizens in those countries, taking into consideration the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of sovereign countries.

The ICO secretary general stressed the ICO's adoption of the issues of security and development—along the path of technological and scientific progress—for the Islamic world. They are a vital element in the achievement of self and collective sufficiencies, a matter which also calls for efforts to be made to effectively determine the human and material resources of the Islamic world for the sake of social progress and economic development. In this respect the ICO secretary general pointed out that the organization has set up specialized institutional mechanisms for cooperation between Islamic countries, a matter which would allow member countries to exploit such mechanisms in order to achieve the best results. The secretary general also stressed the need to defend the religious boundaries of the Islamic world. He said that efforts are being made to improve the efficiency of the ICO General Secretariat and its apparatuses in order to attain the sought after Islamic aims.

8. The conference unanimously elected His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as chairman of the 18th ICO foreign ministers meeting.

9. Following his accession to the chairmanship, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal thanked the ministers for electing him chairman of the conference. He welcomed his good brothers to the soil of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which God has chosen as the place for revelation and as the cradle for Muslims hearts, and as He has chosen them to be Muslims.

He also expressed the firm conviction of the people of the Islamic states to strengthen the march toward Islamic fraternity and solidarity, and to ensure their continuing work to strengthen their effectiveness in the political, economic and social fields. His highness also noted that the convening of the 18th ICO foreign ministers conference in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia signifies a new stage of joint Islamic action. This new stage evolved in the aftermath of important relaxations in the international arena at various levels. We are called on to benefit from this climate, to try and solve all Islamic world problems, and to solve our basic Islamic issues and find results that provide security and stability in our states.

His highness also expressed hope that our conference will contribute to new prospects for economic cooperation among Islamic states. It will hopefully contribute to deepening joint understanding in order to stand up to the cultural onslaught and ideological invasion aimed at breaching our culture and faith, and at melting down the personality and characteristics of our Islamic nation.

His highness expressed hope that the ICO conference will become a free and serious platform for constructive dialogue among its members, and that it will have influence in international organizations and groupings so that it may occupy its approrpriate place for the benefit of Islam and Muslims.

10. The conference elected the foreign ministers of Malyasia, Mali, and Palestine as vice chairmen of the conference. Jordan's representative was elected as general rapporteur for the conference.

11. The conference held a closed session, heard and approved the report of the senior officials, and approved the draft agenda in its final form.

12. The conference decided to call this session the Islamic brotherhood and solidarity session.

13. The conference was acquainted with the ICO secretary general's report on the activities of the general secretariat in the interim between the 17th and the 18th ICO foreign ministers' conferences.

14. The Arab League secretary general, the representative of the UN secretary general, the OAU secretary general, and the representative of the Nonaligned Movement addressed the conference, stressing the need to strenghten the bonds of cooperation with ICO.

The representative of the UN committee in charge of the Inalienble Rights of the Palestinian People also made a speech before the conference in which he explained the committee's activities for the benefit of the Palestinian cause. The representatives of the Islamic Countries Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICECCO), the Center of Studies of Islamic History, Culture and Arts, and the Union of Islamic Countries Radio all spoke before the conference. Also among those who addressed the conference were the Islamic Call Organization, the Academy of Islamic Theology, and the Islamic Council for Europe.

15. The conference heard with brotherly compassion the address made by the representative of the Turkish-Cypriot Muslims, in which he acquainted the conference with the just cause of the Turkish Muslim people in Cyprus.

The conference reaffirmed its previous decisions and resolutions on Cyprus, and welcomed the direct negotiations which began on 15 September 1988 within the framework of the UN secretary general's good offices between Turkish and Greek Cypriots on the basis of the establishment of the federal state between the two sides and two communities.

16. The conference heard with interest the address of the representative of the Islamic Alliance of Afghan Muslims, in which he praised the triumph of the Afghan people, and hoped that all Islamic countries would recognize the provisional government formed by the Afghan shura, and that the empty chair of Afghanistan would be given to the provisional government.

17. The conference heard the address of the MNLF [Moro National Liberation Front] chairman, in which he urged the ICO to revive its efforts to guarantee the implementation of the Tripoli accords through the adoption of more effective measures, including the possibility of granting the MNLF Front ICO membership.

18. A general debate followed, during which the foreign ministers and the heads of the delegations dealt with the most important issues of concern to the Islamic nation, and the need to strengthen cooperation between member countries in all spheres.

19. The conference was acquainted with a report on the activities carried out under the patronage of the Permanent Secretariat for Economic and Commerce Cooperation. The report will be presented at the next ICO summit conference.

20. The conference also heard reports on the outcome of the first ICO conference of information ministers, held in Jeddah in October 1988, and the first ICO conference of culture ministers, held in Dakkar in January 1989. The reports will be presented to the Permanent Secretariat for Cultural and Information Affairs.

21. The conference elected 13 member countries to the membership of the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund. They are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Kuwait, the UAE, the Republic of Turkey, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Iraq, the Libyan Jamahiriyah, the Republic of Pakistan, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Tunisian Republic, the Democratic Republic of Somalia, and the Republic of Niger. [passage indistinct]

Political Affairs

23. The conference hailed the Palestinian people's heroic steadfastness in confronting the Zionist enemy. It called on member states to give all forms of urgent and effective official and popular support to the Palestinian uprising. It designated Friday, 8 April 1990, as a day of Islamic solidarity with the uprising of the Palestinian people.

The conference announced its recognition of the Palestinian state, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It alone has the right to represent them and take part on their behalf independently and on an equal footing in all conferences and activities that concern the Palestinian issue.

It also affirmed that the occupied Arab area should be placed under the interim supervision of the United Nations. It entrusted the international forces with providing protection for the Palestinian citizens and their property and with supervising Israel's complete and unconditional withdrawal from these territories.

The conference affirmed that the Palestinian issue is the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It affirmed the need to speed up the convening of an international Middle East peace conference under UN auspices, and with the participation of the five permanent Security Council members and all the sides involved in the conflict on an equal footing, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The conference should work to realize the comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, and it should strive to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable and unchanging national rights—including the right to self-determination and to establish an independent Palestinian state with Holy Jerusalem as its capital .

The conference reaffirmed adherence to the principle of the inadmissible seizure of territory by force, and it considered all settlements which have been or will be established by the Zionist enemy in the occupied areas, including Holy Jerusalem, null, void and illegal. Their establishment is considered a clear violation of all international charters and laws, particularly the fourth Geneva agreement of 1949.

The conference called on member states to abide by the resolutions of Islamic conferences which call for refraining from establishing any form of relations with Israel. It also underlined the need to challenge documents which admit Israeli delegations to various United Nations General Assembly sessions.

The conference called on the United States of America to promote and strengthen its dialogue with the PLO and to adopt an unbiased stand through recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination—a matter that would help realize a just and comprehensive Middle East solution.

The conference expressed appreciation to the United Nations and its secretary general, to the Nonaligned Movement, to the OAU, and to all the people and international forces which supported and still support the Palestinian issue in international forums, which stood alongside the struggle of the Palestinian people and its blessed uprising, and which condemned the policy of the Zionist enemy and its repressive measures in the occupied areas.

The conference expressed appreciation to the Vatican and the EEC for their positive role and renewed efforts to convene an international Middle East peace conference, for their stands supporting the Palestinian issue, and for their support for the PNC resolutions in its recent session. It called on them to develop their stands and to declare their recognition of the independent Palestinian state.

The conference expressed deep concern over the situation in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. It denounced and condemned the barbarous raids and repeated attacks waged by the Zionist enemy against these camps.

The conference renewed the full commitment of the Islamic nations to the resolutions adopted by the Jerusalem Committee which call for preserving the Arab and Islamic character of the Holy City and a commitment to work for its liberation. It rejected all measures taken by Israel to annex the city and to declare it an eternal capital of the Zionist state. It also expressed deep concern over the escalating criminal activities of the Zionist enemy which are aimed at holy al-Aqsa Mosque. It called on all states having diplomatic relations with Israel to refrain from moving their embassies and representative offices to the Holy City of Jerusalem.

The conference expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Holy Jerusalem Committee, under the chairmanship of His Majesty King Hassan II, the monarch of the Kingdom of Morocco. The conference called upon the Jerusalem Committee to draft a plan to consolidate the Palestinian intifadah—materially and morally—at its next meeting.

The conference stressed the importance of the Jerusalem fund, and the vital and effective role it plays in consolidating the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It called upon member states to adhere to their commitment to meet the fund's requirements.

The conference stated that the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel is one of the factors heightening tension in the region. It called upon member states to take effective measures to confront the dangers resulting from such an alliance.

The conference condemned the continuation of the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan Heights. It stated that Israel's decision to impose its laws and administration upon those Arab territories, as well as the building of settlements in them, are an act of aggression and are null and void.

The conference condemned the continuous Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and called for an immediate withdrawal from all occupied Lebanese territory. The conference stressed concern for Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, and integrity. It repeated its call for the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on Lebanon, particularly numbers 425 and 426 of 1978, and 505 and 509 of 1982. The conference reiterated support for the six-man Arab Committee which is trying to resolve the Lebanese problem.

The conference expressed great concern over Israeli nuclear armament, which constitutes a threat to the security of the Middle East region. It urged the international community to condemn Israel because of its refusal to join the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, its refusal to abandon the policy of possessing nuclear weapons, and its continuous refusal to implement UN Security Council Resolution 484 of 1981, as well as the UNGA and the IAEA resolutions calling on Israel to submit all its nuclear installations to the specifications laid down by the agency. 24. The conference expressed deep satisfaction with the end to the fighting between Iran and Iraq, and praised the two sides for accepting UN Resolution 598 of 1987 and for their strong determination to fully implement it. The conference also praised the two warring sides for respecting the ceasefire, expressing hope that they double their efforts at the direct negotiations under the auspices of the UN secretary general with a view to implementing Resolution 598 in full, and to reaching a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

After listening to the views expressed by Iraq and Iran regarding the issue of the prisoners of war and the implementation of Resolution 598, which the two sides put forward with frankness and a constructive spirit of understanding, the conference called on both sides to intensify efforts to speedily implement Resolution 598, and to speed up the release and return of prisoners in accordance with the third Geneva accords of 1949, which will subsequently end the suffering of the prisoners of war and their families, and will end the human, social and legal problems that might arise. This would contribute to building trust, and would help achieve rapid progress for the establishment of a lasting and comprehensive peace between the two sides.

25. Regarding the Afghanistan issue, the conference hailed the heroic struggle of the Afghan people, under the leadership of the Alliance of Afghan Mujahidin, for the recovery of their identity as a nonaligned Islamic state. The conference also welcomed the formation of the shura its selection of a provisional government with a free and independent will. The conference also welcomed the Geneva agreement, signed 14 April 1988, which constituted an important step toward finding a political solution to the Afghan issue. The conference also hailed the completion of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, which constitutes an important step for the return of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The conference invited the Afghan mujahidin representatives to occupy the seat of the state of Afghanistan, which has remained vacant since the ICO extraordinary session held in Islamabad, in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1980.

The conference also decided to continue giving humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees and to try to obtain their resettlement and rehabilitation in collaboration with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The conference also asked the Islamic Development Bank to make the necessary studies on the requirements for the reconstruction of Afghanistan as a prelude to the preparation of the necessary programs for the participation of the Islamic Development Bank and the member-states in the reconstruction process.

26. The conference reaffirmed that the security of any Islamic country is of concern to all Islamic countries, and expressed its determination to bolster the security of member states through cooperation and solidarity.

27. The conference condemned the continuous U.S. aggression and schemes against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, including its economic boycott, and the downing of two Libyan aircraft on 4 January 1989. The conference reiterated its solidarity with Libya in defending its independence, sovereignty and integrity.

28. The conference expressed deep satisfaction with the planned implementation of the UN plan for the independence of Namibia, warmly praised the people of Namibia for their heroic struggle, under the leadership of SWAPO, its true representative, and reaffirmed its solidarity with the people of Namibia and its support for their building an independent Namibian state on the bases of nonalignment. The conference urged the international community to furnish whatever financial and material aid it could for the Namibian people in an effort to bolster Namibia's sovereignty, integrity, and political independence.

29. The conference affirmed the legitimate and just heroic struggle being waged by the people of South Africa against the apartheid policy being followed by the racist minority regime in Pretoria. The conference strongly condemned the white minority regime for its ugly policies of aparthied, as well as for its conspiracy with the Zionist entity, particularly in the nuclear field. The conference also vehemently condemned the savage repression being waged by the Pretoria regime against the people of South Africa. The conference condemned the erection of Bantustans and called for an immediate end to the state of emergency, as well as the unconditional release of all political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela. The conference urged the UN Security Council to investigate without delay the possible imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against South Africa. 30. The conference condemned the aggressive policies of the South African regime, aimed at shaking the stability of the frontline states, and its continous perpetration of armed aggression against the frontline states. The conference expressed regret over some countries' support for such policies and for some proxy armed groups working for the aims of the racist regime of Pretoria inside some of the frontline states. The conference called upon all member states to furnish political, material, and human aid to the inhabitants of those regions, who are being subjected to Pretoria's terrorist and aggressive policies.

31. The conference saluted the OAU and its specialized committee for its constructive efforts toward establishing peace and security between the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah and Chad. While congratulating the two neighboring countries for restablishing diplomatic relations, it urges them to establish relations based on confidence and brotherhood and the settling of their differences by peaceful means in accordance with the OAU and ICO charters.

32. The confernce urged the member states to give priority to the study of the critical economic situation of the African Sahel for the sake of helping the economies of these countries, which are devastated by drought. It also appealed to the member states to increase their aid to these countries so they can cope with combatting locusts, which desroy their food production. It appealed to them to increase the programs of food aid and emergency assistance for development projects and for combatting the invasion of the desert.

33. The conference called on the international community, especially the advanced states and the international monetary agencies concerned, to speed up the implementation of the UN action program for economic development and revival in Africa for the period 1986-90 and it also called on the member states to increase their aid to African states.

34. While recalling the aims of the ICO charter to bolster peace and security on the basis of justice, and while affirming the commitment of the member states to the aims of the UN Charter to safeguard international peace and security, the conference expressed support for the international efforts of the United Nations to realize complete and comprehensive disarmament—particularly concerning weapons of total destruction. The conference believes that safeguarding international peace and security is not confined to banning the use of chemical weapons, but it also includes banning the possession and use of all chemical weapons and the possession and use of all other weapons of total destruction throughout the world, particularly in areas of tension—such as the Middle East.

35. The conference called on all states, especially the states of the areas concerned, to respond to proposals to establish areas free of nuclear weapons in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. The conference reaffirmed the determination of member states to take measures that fully prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons throughout the world, and without discrimination between states.

36. The conference expressed deep concern over the threat to use nuclear weapons against Islamic states, especially with regard to the danger posed by Israeli and South African nuclear capability. The conference called on the disarmament conference to try urgently to secure the signing of an international treaty which provides protection for nonnuclear states against the danger of the use or threat of use of nuclear weaspons against them.

The conference also urged the two superpowers, as well as other countries with huge military capabilities, to start serious negotiations under the patronage of a conference on disarmament in order to reach a comprehensive agreement banning nuclear tests and another agreement on chemical weapons, to take the necessary measures to achieve full disarmament, and to show more concern for the measures taken to bolster security, build trust, and achieve disarmament at the regional level.

37. The conference reiterated its support for the convening of an international conference, under the auspice of the United Nations, to determine a definition for terrorism in order to distinguish between it and between the peoples' struggle for national independence. The conference condemned all forms of international terrorism, including the crime of aircraft hijacking, as well as other unlawful acts which harm the security and safety of civil aviation.

38. The conference reiterated its support for the unity of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, its integrity and its sovereignty on the Comoran Mayotte Island. The conference called upon member countries to work, individually and collectively, with France in order to prompt it to activate the negotiations with the Federal Islamic Republic of Comoros, with the aim of returning Mayotte Island to the Comoran entity.

39. The conference also urged the countries of the Horn of Africa to continue their contacts in order to find a solution to their pending problems through peaceful means in order to safeguard the security and stability in this region and guarantee a dignified life to the peoples of the region.

40. The conference expressed its solidarity with Sudan, its government and people, in the face of the information campaign and the hostile schemes aimed at harming Sudan's unity, security, stability and identity. The conference called upon member states to furnish moral and material support in order to enable Sudan to safeguard its identity and integrity.

41. The conference stressed that the dumping of toxic waste deposits is considered a crime against the whole Islamic nation. It condemned all multinational companies which have taken part in these disgraceful practices. The conference urged all member countries to ban all unlawful moves to dump toxic and poisonous waste deposits without receiving prior agreements from the receiving country.

42. The conference expressed deep anxiety over the plight of millions of refugees throughout the world, the majority of whom belong to the Islamic world. It urged member countries to coordinate the work at the international level in order to uncover the fundamental reasons behind the exodus of refugees in the Islamic world and in other countries, and in order to eliminate them.

43. The conference expressed extreme concern over the plight of some Islamic communities in non-Islamic states. It stressed the need to make concerted efforts to protect the basic human and religious rights of these communities and to safeguard their cultural heritage.

44. The conference expressed deep regret over the nonfulfillment by the Philippines Government of its commitment to implement the 1976 Tripoli agreement. It urged member states to give humanitarian, material and financial aid to the Moro National Liberation Front. It asked the four-man ministerial committee and the ICO secretary general to strengthen their efforts, and their contact with the Philippines government, in order to hasten the full implementation of the Tripoli agreement.

45. The conference expressed solidarity with the Turkish Muslim minority being persecuted in Bulgaria. It highly appreciated the continuous efforts of the ICO liaison team to reduce the plight of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria. While the conference denounced the repressive acts against this Turkish Muslim minority and the continuation of the practices aimed at destroying the religious and cultural identity of this minority, it appealed to the Bulgarian Government to stick to the commitments it has undertaken concerning the restoration of all religious and cultural rights of the Turkish Muslim minority and of other Muslims, and to end the restrictions directed against them.

46. The conference issued a declaration of joint Islamic action to combat the blasphemous campaign against Islam. It stressed its determination to coordinate the efforts of the Islamic states which rely on the shari'ah to combat blasphemy against Islam. The conference declared that blasphemy cannot be justified on the basis of freedom of expression and opinion. The conference strongly condemned the book "The Satanic Verses", whose author is regarded as a heretic. It appeals to all members of society to impose a ban on the book and to take the necessary legislation to ensure the protection of the religious beliefs of others. The conference announced that the Islamic states will make effective and coordinated efforts to ensure respect for Islam and its noble values.

47. The conference observed with satisfaction the growing cooperation between the United Nations and ICO in various fields. It asked the secretary general to continue moves to expand the scope of this cooperation, which realizes mutual benefits to both organizations. The conference asked the secretary general to continue active work toward the signing of a cooperation agreement with the Arab League, and to intensify his contacts with the OAU General Secretariat to sign a similar cooperation

agreement with that organization. It also asked him to continue his efforts to improve cooperation with the Nonaligned Movement and with international and regional organizations.

48. The conference noted the importance of initiating with speed the establishment of an international Islamic court of justice, and it urged member states which have not ratified the basic statute of the court and the linked amendment contained in the ICO Charter to do so as soon as possible, and to deposit the ratification documents with the secretary general.

49. The conference appealed to member states to provide the General Secretariat with their views on an Islamic human rights document for the purpose of compiling a final draft.

50. While reviewing the situation concerning member states signing the various agreements that have been concluded within the framweork of the ICO, it urged member states which have not signed or ratified these agreements to do so as soon as possible.

Information

51. The conference expressed its deep appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which hosted the first ICO information ministers conference in Jeddah in October 1988, and it noted its report on the conference with thanks.

52. The conference also expresed deep gratitude to His Excellency President Abdou Diouf, president of the Republic of Senegal and chairman of the Permanent Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs for the positive role it has been playing to strengthen cooperation among member states in the information field.

53. The conference approved the activities and program proposed by the General Secretariat in order to implement the information plan in 1989.

54. The conference studied the report of the International Islamic News Agency, and expressed satisfaction with the progress made in developing this agency and intensifying its activities.

55. The conference thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its generosity. It urged member states which have not yet paid their subscriptions to the ICO budget to do so quickly.

56. The conference expressed its deep anxiety over the unjust international economic situation and its repercussions on Islamic countries. It called upon member countries to effectively take part in the preparations for the emergency United Nations General Assembly session on international economic cooperation and development, and to prepare an international strategy of development before the convening of the fourth United Nations General Assembly conference on development. It also urged member countries to join the agreement on the international preferential stance on trade within the framework of such a system. The conference called upon developed countries to take immediate measures to revive the international economy and to provide urgent development aid for developing countries. It urged member countries to continue efforts to implement the plan of action to bolster member countries' cooperation.

57. The conference expressed its appreciation for the assistance given by the Islamic countries and other ICO bodies to the least developed countries. It called upon the General Secretariat to pay attention to the problems of landlocked countries within the framework of its comprehensive concern for the least developed countries.

58. The conference urged the international community to assist the drought-stricken countries, and called for generous donations to help these countries combat drought and the effects of desertification.

59. The conference expressed its satisfaction with the Islamic solidarity shown by some countries, as well as the Islamic Bank for Development, toward Sudan and Bangladesh to alleviate the disastrous effects of flooding. It urged member states to continue furnishing generous urgent aid to both countries.

60. The conference called upon all member states to mobilize their resources to combat the danger of locusts, and urged the international community to consolidate the efforts of countries affected by locusts.

61. The conference welcomed the establishment of the long-term financial system within the framework of the Islamic Development Bank. It urged all member states to join this system and facilitate the means to benefit from it in a much better way. The conference expressed satisfaction with the steps taken to form an Islamic multilateral (?bartering) federation.

62. The conference expressed its appreciation to the Islamic government of Pakistan for hosting the third ministerial conference of member states on food sufficiency and agricultural development—held in Islamabad in October 1988.

63. The conference expressed its deep concern over the foreign debts incurred by African states. It called on the advanced and creditor countries—whether states or multinational organizations—to take appropriate measures to ease the debt burden on African states. It asked member states and multi-sided financial institutions to provide African states with capital at low interest rates, including whatever this entails in the way of financial aid.

64. The conference called on member states to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Chad, and to contribute to economic development and revival programs in Chad.

65. The conference issued a decision concerning cooperation among Islamic countries in combating epidemics.

66. The conference welcomed the 11 March 1989 Hague declaration concerning protection of the ozone layer, and it called on ICO member states to cooperate in safeguarding the environment. It asked international

organizations, when dealing with the question of the environment, to take into account the various stages of development and the responsibility of various states for environmental deterioration. The conference decided to include an article entitled: "Between the member states on the question of the environment" in the agenda of the 19th Islamic foreign ministers conference.

67. The conference reviewed the activities carried out by the ICO bodies and branches in the cultural field. It laid down the programs to be financed or bolstered by the organization, and adopted a number of resolutions.

68. The conference paid importance to the spreading of the Islamic culture and education, as well as Arabic and general education. It expressed, in this context, its satisfaction with the progress achieved by Islamic universities in Niger, Uganda, Malaysia, and Bangladesh, which were set up under the ICO aegis. The conference urged member states, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the Islamic Development Fund and other Islamic bodies to furnish financial and material assistance to such universities.

69. The conference also examined the reports presented by the General Secretariat on King Faysal University in Chad, the Regional Institute for Islamic Studies and Research in T'mbuctu in Mali, the Regional Institution for Secondary Education in Pakistan, the Islamic Center in Moroni, Comoros, and the Islamic Center in Guinea-Bissau, as well as the World Islamic Organization for Women and the International Union of Arab-Islamic schools, and called upon member states and Islamic institutions to generously furnish financial, material, and technical assistance to such bodies.

70. The conference adopted an action plan proposed by the Center of Islamic History, Arts and Culture of Istanbul for this year, and praised the center for its achievement. The conference also adopted the future action plan proposed by the Committee for the Protection of the Islamic Cultural Heritage, and expressed its deep appreciation to His Royal Highness Prince Faysal ibn Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, chairman of the committee, for his care and continuous guidance for the committee.

The conference expressed appreciation for the work carried out by the Islamic Theological Academy. The conference was briefed on the report of the Islamic Education, Cultural and Scientific Organization Committee. The conference urged all member states to pay great attention to the activities of the Sports Union of the Islamic Solidarity Games, and expressed apprecation to His Royal Highness Prince Faysal ibn Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who is in charge of youth care in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for his care for such a union.

71. The conference expressed deep anxiety over drug abuse and the unlawful use of narcotics in the world. It urged countries to exert continuous and concerted efforts to end the production of narcotics and their trafficking in Islamic countries.

72. The conference expressed its deep appreciation for ICO member states's generous donations to the Islamic Solidarity Fund and its charity Fund, and called on all member states to contribute to the charity fund.

Administrative and Financial Affairs

73. The ICO ratified the 10th financial control body report. It called on the General Secretariat and its branches to abide by and implement the remarks and recommendations included in the report.

74. The conference adopted the General Secretariat draft budget, which will be financed through the compulsory contributions system.

75. The conference also adopted the budgets of the following ICO bodies: The Center for Statistical, Economic, Social and Training Research of Islamic Countries, in Ankara; the Islamic Center for Technical, Vocational and Research Training, in Dhaka; the Center for Research in Islamic History, Arts, and Cultute, in Istanbul; the Islamic Center for the Development of Trade, in Casablanca; the International Committee for the Preservation of the Islamic Heritage, in Istanbul; the Islamic Jurisprudence Complex, in Jeddah; and the Islamic Institute for Science, Technology, and Development, in Jeddah.

Concerning the quotas allocated to the member states' contributions to the budgets of the General Secretariat and its bodies, the conference called for the convening of a technical commission meeting formed from the member states, where membership will be left open, to discuss the form of study the General Secretariat and the Ankara center should carry out, and to submit the recommendations it deems appropriate to the 19th ICO foreign ministers meeting through the permanent financial committee.

76. The conference expressed its concern over the acute financial situation facing the ICO, and called on the member states who are behind with their payments to honor their financial commitments. The conference also charged the permanent financial committee to study the problem of arrears and to propose suitable solutions to solve the problem.

77. The conference called for a meeting of the seven-man governmental committee in charge of regulations and posts. It requested the General Secretariat to submit a report in this connection to the 19th ICO foreign ministers' meeting.

78. On the question of coordination, the conference entrusted the secretary general with the task of drawing up a plan for ways and means to implement a comprehensive strategy of joint Islamic action, to be guided by the Mecca declaration, and by the economic action plan which was approved by the third Islamic summit conference.

The conference defined the general framework for reorganizing the General Secretariat and its branch organs. It called on the General Secretariat and its suborgans and bodies to take charge of the tasks assigned to them, to take the appropriate measures to rationalize their activities, and to provide favorable conditions for effectively facilitating their work.

The conference affirmed the need for coordination organs, and it asked the secretary general to form a coordination unit.

79. The conference decided that the Arab Republic of Egypt and the General Secretariat should carry out consultation on fixing a date for the 19th Islamic foreign ministers conference.

80. The conference welcomed the gracious invitation of the Turkish Republic to host the 20th Islamic foreign ministers conference.

The Final Speeches

81. The ICO secretary general and the conference chairman made speeches at the end of the conference in which they expressed grateful thanks to all the delegations for their cooperative spirit solidarity, and brotherhood, which characterized the debates. They also extended thanks to members of the technical secretariat and other workers who gave excellent service to the conference.

Expression of Thanks

82. The conference spoke on behalf of the Asian African, and Arab groups about the arrangement, and they expressed grateful thanks and gratitude to King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—government and people—for the welcome and hospitality conferred on the delegations and for the excellent arrangements which had been made to convene the conference, which greatly contributed to the success of the conference. [sentence as received]

Following the ICO secretary general's reading of the final communique, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal commented, saying: This communique obviously expresses the totality of the issues dealt with by the conference, and the communique was given to the press. The secretary general, stressed in his reading, the fundamental and principal paragraphs dealt with by the conference.

His royal highness then answered journalists' questions. Answering a question regarding the fact that the communique did not point to Salman Rushdie's book, His Royal Highness said: We must have read different things, because his excellency the secretary general, during the conference proceedings, mentioned this issue. There is a declaration of some lines in page 18, Article 46 of the final communique containing a clear mention of this issue, which was neither ignored, nor disregarded. He said it was dealt with fully and completely. A declaration on this issue was pointed out by his excellency the secretary general.

Regarding the exchange of POW's between Iraq and Iran, and the final formula upon which it was agreed, his royal highness indicated that it was outlined in the communique and read by his excellency the secretary general. The matter was agreed on in the political committee following the withdrawal by the two committees of the projects they had submitted. He said: We are leased with the way this issue was dealt with. It was characterized by a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity. The discussions within the political committee were characterized by amity and brotherhood, so much so that the two delegations, which each brought a draft resolution, agreed to withdraw the draft resolutions submitted to this effect, and agreed to be content with the wording of the final communique.

His royal highness indicated that the final communique consists of the underlined debates reached by the executive bureau, and the discussions which took place within the political committee and the general assembly.

His royal highness the foreign minister, in a description of the situation between Iraq and Iran, said that all the conferees were pleased with the treatment of the subject, and all those who intervened at the conference said that it was characterized by a clear conscience and a desire to improve relations between the two countries. The conference rapporteur indicated the paragraph agreed on in the final communique, which reads as follows:

"After having heard the opinions expressed by Iraq and Iran with regard to the issue of POW's and the implementation of Resolution 598, opinions which both sides expressed with frankness and a constructive spirit of understanding, the meeting called on both sides to intensify efforts to implement Resolution 598 very soon, to release the prisoners, and to enable them to return to their countries in accordance with the third Geneva agreement of 1949, and thus end the suffering of the POWs and their families, and human, social, and legal problems. This would contribute to building confidence and would help achieve speedy progress in the establishment of lasting and comprehensive peace between the two countries."

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal stated that this matter was the last issue discussed and adopted by the conference.

Answering a question about the recommendations and the resolutions that the conference would make in the economic, cultural, and political fields, His Royal Highness said: In most cases, important issues tend to reflect on the agenda, which could have a routine aspect, however, results could be very important, especially if we look at the issue from a common Islamic point of view.

His royal highness said that he believed that in addition to the important resolutions adopted by the meeting on political issues—such as backing the intifadah, the Palestinian cause, the Iraqi-Iranian war, the return of Afghanistan to the ICO, and the support gained by the Afghan cause in this meeting, which are important issues and matters of destiny in the history of the Islamic nation—this meeting has discussed, in an important and meticulous manner, issues of cooperation among Islamic states, and the development of the capabilitis of the institutes, bodies and organizations falling within this action. His royal highness indicated that the secretary general spoke in length on this issue when he read the press release.

His royal highness said that he believed that the issus discussed by the administrative, financial, and cultural committees could be considered a turning point in Islamic common action.

His royal highness said that the meeting, and in particular ourselves in this country, are happy with this development, because at the end of the day Islamic solidarity should be based on bolstering cooperation among Islamic states themselves, mainly in the economic and cultural areas. His royal highness pointed out that this was the aim of the conference. He said that we are very happy about this. He said that the ICO has received much support and its members are leased with the appointment of the new general secretary, who began his duties during the conference. He backed the general secretariat in carrying out the necessary reforms that are likely to improve the role of the organization and increase its ability to supervise its sub groups. His royal highness stressed that these resolutions are numerous and that, when reexamining the press release, these points will be clear.

Concerning a question on what was pointed out by the Iranian delegate on the possibility of a reference to relations between the Kingdom and Iran, and whether his highness agrees with this view, His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal replied:

Prior to the start of the conference I had the opportunity to meet a number of journalists. I pointed out to them that one of the policy foundations laid down by King Fahd is that relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and any Islamic state should be at their best level. I emphasized that to this end we have worked and are prepared to continue working with any person. King Fahd expressed joy over the fact that the questioner had heard this comment from the Iranian delegate, and pointed out that this bodes well for Islamic cooperation.

Concerning a question on whether the granting of a seat at the organization to the Afghan mujahidin constitutes a recognition of the Afghan provisional government, and how to interpret reservations on the part of some states and the abstention of others, his highness said: I was pleased when I presented the draft resolution on Afghanistan to the conference.

His highness added that the gist of the contacts and maneuvers that took place regarding this subject stemmed from the premise that the conference dealt with issues from the viewpoint of the conference itself. In dealing with this issue, the conference does not begin from the premise of mutual recognition between any state and another state. Mutual recognition is a sovereign right.

His highness said that as regards Afghanistan, there had been an issue concerning the suspension of Afghanistan's membership during the extraordinary conference which convened in Islamabad when the Afghan problem began. At that time, at the start of the intervention, Afghanistan's membership was suspended. At that time the ICO made a conference decision not to withdraw recognition, but to suspend membership. His highness continued by saying that in light of the developments that have taken place—which were pointed out very clearly in the communique—that is, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the formation of the Afghan provisional government, and the beginning of the move toward the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan, it had become necessary during this conference to hear the voice of Afghanistan at the ICO. Thus, the decision was made to give membership to the provisional government of Afghanistan which, from the ICO's point of view, represents the Afghan people.

His highness said: I want to point out in this respect that when the ICO decided to suspend the ICO membership of the hireling government in Kabul, it also decided to let the mujahidin speak on behalf of Afghanistan. Thus, throughout the preceding period during which membership was suspended, the Afghan mujahidin and the mujahidin federation spoke on behalf of Afghans. His highness pointed out that this decision was made by the ICO and, consequently, it is only natural—now that matters have gone in favor of the struggling, fighting mujahidin and they have achieved this great victory in Afghanistan, which is reflected in the conference's treatment of this issue—that the ICO grants them Afghanistan's seat in the organization.

His highness said: I would like to point out that the speech by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar addressed very important subjects, including the move toward the development of goodneighborly relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. This is among the subjects about which everyone at this conference voiced an opinion.

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal indicated that the second point tackled by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar during his speech was about opening their hearts and minds to the Afghans among the opposition to bring about cohesion between the Afghans so that security and stability will prevail in the future. This is an orientation stressed by the conference with its full support. We hope that it was highly appreciated by the conference that the Soviet forces have withdrawn from Afghanistan, as they announced, and the opportunity is now ripe for relations of cooperation and respect between the Afghans and the Soviets, because the Soviet Union can play a big role in building Afghanistan. They can rebuild what the war damaged and build strong future relations with the Afghan people. His highness pointed out that the conferees hope that the step made by the conference will lead to convincing all Afghans groups to rally around this leadership, to end the war and lay down arms, to start building this country—which has been destroyed by war all these years—and to end the bloodshed in Afghanistan.

His royal highness said that the entire Islamic world has expressed its desire to help rebuild what the war has destroyed to allow Afghanistan to regain its independence and development at the same time.

Concerning a question related to the decided quota of Muslim pilgrims in the number of countries, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal indicated that this issue was not discussed. He pointed out that the discussion of this issue was concluded in the Jordanian capital, Amman. He said: I believe all those who adopted this decision were happy with what they decided. The result was good, thanks be to God, and there were no negative remarks.

Concerning a question on efforts to ensure respect for Islam and its holy values, his highness and chairman pointed out that this subject was widely discussed among the ICO member states, and that, in this connectiion, the communique clarifies the common efforts made to deal with this subject.

His highness said: I do not think that the conference was content with condemnation. To begin with, it expressed a desire that this subject be dealt with through international cooperation because it raises sensitive issues. It is better to treat it via international cooperation on the basis of mutual respect for cultures and common beliefs. His highness added that bodies connected with common Islamic cooperation will take this communique as a basis on which to work in this context by contacting various governments about this subject. The communique will be used as a basis for common Islamic action on ways to explain Islam so there will be no misunderstanding of the goals of Muslims with regard to current issues.

Concerning a question on the type of economic aid and cooperation between the Islamic countries, his highness referred to the documents of the Islamic summit conference that was held in Mecca and the development contract ['aqd al tanmiyah] approved there. Various aspects addressed the development of commerce and the establishment of institutions, by which is meant the Islamic Development Bank, which began business at that time. Cooperation is aimed at the development of trade among the states belonging to the bank. The doors of the bank opened for business in numerous and various fields in this context. Capital was also increased so that it would be the base for the development of all types of trade among Islamic states.

His highness pointed out that in this field the Islamic states have deposited and allocated funds for the development plan in the Islamic world or the development contract in the various Islamic states within the program approved in Mecca for development activities in the Islamic states. His highness the prince pointed out that the program has been implemented and there are documents on the results of this cooperation and support for the the development programs, especially the basic facilities in the Islamic world that are available at the General Secretariat. His highness said that if you are interested in this issue, there is specific information on the programs that have been funded in the various Islamic states.

His highness pointed out that what has been agreed on in the field of economic cooperation during this session is a very important subject. He said the bodies affected by this subject (?should) become more effective and the level of administration in them should be raised. He pointed out that there is a committee that works within the framework of assisting cooperation in the economic sphere. It is chaired by the president of the Turkish Republic, meets regularly, presents reports, and puts forth recommendations to the summit conferences. He pointed out that the most recent recommendation of this committee was made to the last summit conference. The next recommendation or report will be announced at the next summit conference in Senegal. His highness said that its work is also recorded, and there are details of what this committee has done in support of economic cooperation, aside from the spheres of commerce, means of development, and the opening of cooperation among the Islamic states.

Answering a question on the Arab good offices committee for national reconciliation in Lebanon and the support of the ICO member states for the Arab efforts, his royal highness said: I have read a communique released by the conference on Lebanon which calls on the Lebanese brothers to end the fighting and to cooperate with the six-man Arab league committee. He then referred to the important paragraph on Lebanon which was included in the final declaration of this conference and added: The communique that was read out yesterday and the paragraph included in this evening's final communique, which was read out by the ICO secretary general, both reflect the great concern of the Islamic Conference over the situation in Lebanon and its support for the efforts of the six-man committee formed by the Arab League Council. His royal highness said: I believe, and I read in the newspapers, that the committee members held a meeting during this conference, indicating that the Islamic Conference is not concerned with this and is not a participant in the committee.

In reply to a question on the presence of a TASS correspondent and on whether this is a sign of the resumption of relations between Moscow and Riyadh, his royal highness said: There are relations between TASS and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and I do not know whether it means more than this. He added: The only relations that have not yet been established between the two countries are diplomatic relations...and you know that diplomatic relations existed between the two countries 50 years ago.

Concerning a question on what has been mentioned in the final press release with regard to Salman Rushdie, and which described him as an apostate, and whether this means a call to carry out the maximum sentence against him, his royal highness replied that this description was derived from edicts of Islamic jurisprudence that were issued by jurisprudence bodies in the Islamic world. He said that they agreed to apply this adjective to the author, however they differed on how to deal with this issue. His royal highness added that since the conference is not a religious gathering, it adopted the formula of the jurisprudence agreed on by the jurisprudence bodies. The conference tackled the points that needed tackling by Islamic states on the basis of cooperation among these states.

His royal highness pointed out that rulings that are being issued with regard this issue do not concern this conference but do concern specialized jurisprudence bodies. He said: Yesterday I indicated that there is a divergence of opinion among religious scholars in the Islamic world with regard to this case, and we are waiting for a concensus from them.

Concluding his news conference, his royal highness thanked journalists for their cooperation and coverage of the conference, as did the ICO general secretary. His royal highness said that we are happy with the spirit of cooperation that reigns among Islamic states. This spirit is a good omen, God willing, for the likely success of Islamic common action and for the future of Islamic solidarity.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Reportedly To Join PLO-U.S. Talks

JN1903081089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Mar (INA)—Senior Palestinian sources have informed the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will participate in the next round of talks that will be held within the framework of the PLO-U.S. dialogue due to be held in Tunis next Wednesday [22 March]. These sources indicated that U.S. Ambassador in Tunis Robert Pelletreau will represent the U.S. side in the dialogue while 'Arafat will participate with the Palestinian side to the dialogue.

PLO Preparing Working Paper for U.S. Talks

JN1803114089 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 16 Mar 89 p 22

[Excerpt] Paris—[Passage omitted] AL-QABAS has learned that the PLO's leadership is currently preparing a detailed working paper to be given to the Palestinian delegation to discuss its contents with American Ambassador Pelletreau. High-ranking Palestinian sources told AL-QABAS that the Palestinian working paper includes a number of questions and points dealing with the following issues:

1. The Palestinian delegation will try to learn the American view on the convening of an international peace conference and the preparations for this conference. The delegation will also try to learn whether the Bush administration is still committed to the convening of the international conference and wants to postpone its convening until a later stage or if is it thinking of completely relinquishing the international conference.

The Palestinian delegation will ask for clarifications on the American concept regarding the PLO's role either in the international conference or in the preparatory stage.

2. The Palestinian delegation will affirm the PLO leadership's readiness to hold meetings, dialogue, and talks with Israeli officials in any place and at any time to discuss the various issues related to the Palestine question and the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. However, the PLO's leadership believes that these talks must be a prelude for convening an international conference, provided that the real and effective peace negotiations should take place within, not outside, the international conference. The Palestinian officials believe that the international conference is the real guarantee for a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict that will ensure the Palestinian people's national, legitimate rights, particularly the right to self-determination.

3. The Palestinian delegation will affirm the PLO leadership's refusal to partition the Palestinian problem or to conclude a separate Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement. The PLO's leadership believes that the Palestinian problem is not confined to the West Bank and Gaza. It also believes that any solution to this problem must tackle all related aspects, including the future of the Palestinians who live in the Arab countries and the rest of the world and the rights of those Palestinians.

Any agreement on the West Bank and Gaza must constitute the first stage of the settlement of the Palestinian problem as a whole.

4. The Palestinian delegation will reiterate the PLO leadership's adherence to the right of the Palestinian people—wherever they are—to repatriation. This means that the PLO's leadership will not simply relinquish the right of the Palestinian people living outside the occupied Palestine and the West Bank to repatriation. This issue must be a topic on the negotiations agenda, and the Palestinians must receive compensation for losing their lands and estates.

5. The Palestinian delegation will affirm that the PLO's leadership cannot accept the cessation of the intifadah [uprising] in the West Bank and Gaza in exchange for some tangible measures aimed at pacifying the situation and mitigating the Israeli repressive measures and military presence. The Palestinian delegation will stress that the intifadah will only stop if earnest peaceful negotiations are embarked on to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem.

6. During the meeting with the American ambassador, the Palestinian delegation will also call on the Bush administration to differentiate between terrorist operations and legitimate armed resistance against occupation authorities. The Palestinian delegation will try to reach an American-Palestinian understanding on defining the meaning of terrorism and legitimate armed resistance.

The Palestinian sources told AL-QABAS that the Palestinian delegation will be ready to respond to any questions raised by Ambassador Pelletreau. The delegation will suggest promoting the level of Palestinian-American contacts and meetings in the coming stage.

Abu Sharif on Issues for Dialogue With U.S.

JN1703193889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Bassam Abu Sharif, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, has announced that the names of the Palestinian figures who met and are meeting with Israeli officials are not a secret to the PLO, which knows what these Palestinian figures are saying to Shamir and to other Israeli officials.

This is what Bassam abu Sharif has stated. Bassam Abu Sharif visited Paris and delivered a lecture at the political science college in Paris yesterday. We had Bassam Abu Sharif as our guest, and the first question we posed to him was the following: Does the PLO know about the Palestinian figures who met and are meeting with Israeli officials?

[Begin recording] [Abu Sharif] The names of these Palestinian nationalist figures are known. All these figures, without exception, have informed us of the results of the meetings to which they were summoned and what they told the Israeli authorities.

[Unidentified reporter] This means that the names of the Palestinian figures whom Shamir and other Israeli officials had met are no secret to the PLO?

[Abu Sharif] Their names are not a secret either to the PLO or to the Palestinians. Everybody knows that the occupation authorities and Israeli ministers summoned several Palestinian figures and held talks with them on the future of the territories. Their answer was clear. They told them that there is the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative, and if Israel wants peace it must negotiate with the PLO.

[Reporter] Is there anything that prevents disclosing the names of these Palestinian figures?

[Abu Sharif] There is nothing that prevents this.

[Reporter] For example?

[Abu Sharif] There is Faysal al-Husayni. It is well known that he has been summoned more than once and that he has been arrested more than once because of his activities and discussions to attain a solution and the establishment of a comprehensive peace.

[Reporter] Are there others?

[Abu Sharif] Faysal al-Husayni is now in Washington. If they wish, he can confirm this to U.S. officials. There are figures from Nabulus, the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, and Ramallah. All these...

[Reporter, interrupting] Please give us some names?

[Abu Sharif] There are also Sari Nusaybah, Fayiz abu Rahmah, Hanna Sinyurah, Ilyas Frayj, and other figures.

[Reporter] Let us now talk about the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, which will resume in Tunis next week. Is this dialogue a serious one at the present time? What will you tell the Americans in a clear manner during the first session of the resumption of the dialogue?

[Abu Sharif] During the meetings that will be held, several basic issues will be raised. Among these is how to end the systematic Israeli terrorism against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the Palestinian people's right to escalate their intifadah [uprising] against Israeli occupation, and a series of stands, which explicitly define the PLO's stand on every issue.

For example—the stand on what is taking place in southern Lebanon—Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has explained more than once that there are contacts by third parties about a cease-fire agreement. A cease-fire agreement in southern Lebanon cannot be signed by one party only. It must be signed by two parties. Israel must suspend its raids, attacks, naval siege, destruction of houses—whether in the Palestinian camps or Lebanese villages—so that we can say that a cease-fire agreement can be discussed and reached in southern Lebanon.

The major issue will always remain how to push ahead the efforts for the convocation of an international conference. Another major issue is the formation of the preparatory committee for the international conference. We hope that cooperation between the USSR and the United States, particularly following Minister Shevardnadze's tour of the region, will pave the way for preliminary meetings between the two superpowers and among the other UN Security Council permanent members to hold the international conference.

[Reporter] My last question: In your opinion, how long can the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue continue without any results?

[Abu Sharif] I believe that the dialogue has not stopped. I believe that this dialogue will become more firmly entrenched with the passage of time and will not remain restricted to only one channel. Following U.S. recognition of the PLO and its decision to initiate a dialogue with it, I do not see any obstacle to prevent upgrading the level of these meetings and their taking place more often.

Our Palestinian people will pursue their intifadah, continuing to confront the occupation with PLO leadership. This is the basic dynamic factor that will impose on the world at large, and particularly on the superpowers, the Middle East issue as the first item on the agenda of the world's urgent issues that need to be settled politically. I am optimistic because the new U.S. Administration will see facts as clearly as they are and will realize that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state is the basic factor of stability in the Middle East, without which no stability can be achieved.

[Reporter] I would like to ask another question, although I said that the previous question was my last. If the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue fails, something which one expects when dealing with politics, what is the alternative?

[Abu Sharif] There is no possibility for failure here. There can be delay, procrastination, but there is no possibility for failure because we are committed to the peace initiative that Brother Abu 'Ammar launched and because we are confronting and will continue to confront the occupation. We will escalate this confrontation, as this will create a major crisis in Israel and the Israeli army of occupation will not be able to resist for long the stones of the children of Palestine. [end recording]

Factions To Discuss Dialogue With Israelis

JN1803151689 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that an important meeting for the Palestinian leadership, to be attended by PLO Executive Committee members and general secretaries of Palestinian factions, will be held in Tunis soon in order to assess the course and results of the dialogues that take place between Palestinians from the occupied territory and Israelis.

Informed Palestinian sources told AL-ITTIHAD that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] have reservations on the continuation of these dialogues out of fear that they will be used by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to create an alternative leadership to the PLO with which he can negotiate.

These sources added that the trend led by Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat, together with most members of the Executive Committee, supports the continuation of these dialogues, provided they are organized, since the negotiating Palestinians do not depart from the Palestinian constants and assert their adherence to the resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council [PNC] during its recent session in Algiers.

PFLP-GC Admits Israeli Air Raid, Casualties

JN2003144689 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1422 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Brother strugglers, we have just received the following: A military spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] has stated the following:

Within the framework of its continuous hostile measures against the masses of our Palestinian people and their revolutionary bases, in view of the successive defeats the heroic masses of the intifadah [uprising] are inflicting on the Zionist entity, and in an attempt to break out of its its impasse, the Zionist enemy planes this afternoon raided the bases of the PFLP-GC, which believes that armed struggle is the way to confront the enemy and its allies. The means of air defense intercepted the raiding planes and confronted them with intense fire. As a result of the raid, our hero strugglers sustained several casualties. We will issue a subsequent statement in this regard.

We make a pledge to the masses of our Palestinian Arab people that the banner of armed struggle will continue to be raised until the liberation of land and man.

PLF Claims Responsibility for Attack From Jordan

NC1903223889 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2215 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The Palestine Liberation Front [PLF] distributed a statement in West Beirut today announcing its responsibility for the attack launched from Jordan against Israel during which an Israeli soldier was killed.

Abu Musa To 'Free' 2 Detained

LD1903175789 Tehran IRNA in English 1745 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, March 19, IRNA—Leader of transitory Palestinian Command Council Colonel Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] today threatened to use force to set free two Palestinian combatants from the Jordanian agents.

Abu Musa who leads the anti-'Arafat Fatah faction told IRNA here that the Amman regime has arrested two of his combatants on charges of attacking Zionist positions through Jordanian territory.

"King Husayn's measure contradicts decisions taken at the Palestine National Council which allows Palestinians to carry out operations against Israel," Abu Musa said.

He said in a calculated policy the Jordanian regime along with 'Arafat is trying to create secure borders for the Zionist regime, "and this is against the spirit of the Palestinian resistance and uprising."

He called on King Husayn to take speedy measures to release the two Palestinians.

'Arafat Continues Official Visit to Hungary

Straub Hosts Lunch

LD1603213189 Budapest MTI in English 1827 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Budapest, March 16 (MTI)—It is obvious to the peace-loving public of the world and unambiguous for other states, that the key to solving the Middle East crisis lies in settling the fate of the Palestinian Arab people and putting an end to Israeli occupation in the areas invaded in 1967. The unarmed uprising of the population of the occupied areas, which has lasted for over a year, and has brought about a qualitative change not only in local conditions but also in the international evaluation of the urgency of settlement, is the consequence of the distress and thirst for freedom of the Palestinian people, said Bruno F. Straub, president of the Presidential Council, to Yasir 'Arafat in the parliament building.

Hungary evaluates the resolutions of the 19th session of the Palestine National Council in Algeria as developments improving the chances of settlement and of the international peace conference, and events of epochal import in the history of the Middle East crisis, which seeks to enforce in practice the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people. Our people and government have always supported the enforcement of this legitimate right, including the right of the Palestinian Arab people to establish an independent state of its own. On the basis of our consistently represented policy, we recognize the proclamation of the Palestine state. We are convinced that a lasting and just settlement for the long suffering Palestinian people and the other states of the region, including Israel, can only be guaranteed by an international peace conference to be held under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel.

We are convinced that, despite our modest possibilities, we can make worthwhile endeavours, together with other factors, to improve the conditions of settlement and establish the indispensable dialogue. From this stems our intention of maintaining settled relations with all parties concerned in the conflict, in the service of our joint aims, the Hungarian head of state said.

Yasir 'Arafat expressed thanks for the cordial welcome and for Hungary's support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people for its right of self-determination, freedom and independence. He expressed the hope that his current visit would contribute to deepening understanding and cooperation between the two peoples, and was satisfied to see that Hungary gave a similar evaluation to the just national struggle of the Palestinian people for freedom, independence, and the protection of its national identity.

Mr 'Arafat emphasized, among other things, that the Palestinian people would continue its just national struggle until victory. Our people struggles for establishing freedom and peace for all peoples in the region, he said. Our people has clearly expressed its desire for peace and its peaceful intentions. We have committed ourselves to international legality, and accepted the U.N. resolutions related to the Palestinian issue and the Middle East, including resolutions No 242 and 338. We hold it necessary to convene, as soon as possible, a Middle East peace conference with the participation based on equal rights of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and all parties involved in the conflict, including the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

After the gala lunch, Yasir 'Arafat paid a courtesy visit on Istvan Huszar, general secretary of the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front. In a cordial atmosphere, the sides appreciated the pioneering role played by the People's Front movement in the establishment of Hungarian-Palestinian bilateral political relations. Mr Huszar informed the Palestinian politician on the place and role of the Patriotic People's Front, which is being renewed in the wake of the reform of the system of political institutions. On behalf of the People's Front movement, Mr Huszar assured the Palestine Liberation Front of further solidarity and cooperation in it struggle for independence and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Mr Huszar also said that a Hungarian People's Front delegation would soon visit Jordan with the aim of strengthening relations between the PPF and the PLO.

'Text' of 'Arafat Speech

JN1703180289 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

["Text" of speech by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, delivered at a luncheon banquet hosted in his honor by Bruno Straub, president of the Hungarian Presidential Council in Budapest on 16 March—read by announcer]

[Text] Your Excellency Comrade President Bruno Straub, esteemed ladies and gentlemen: Permit me to voice my warmest personal feelings to you over our presence here with you and amongst you and also to express to you the greetings of our struggling Palestinian people as well as those of my brothers, the PLO Executive Committee members. Allow me also to extend my deep thanks to you and to the friendly Hungarian people for the great, hospitable welcome accorded our delegation and for the stands taken by the Hungarian People's Republic supporting and backing our people's just struggle for the sake of securing their rights to self-determination, freedom, and independence.

Your Excellency, the president of the Presidential Council; ladies and gentlemen: Humanity has cherished and held in high esteem the great value of friendship. Nothing equals the feeling that one is surrounded by friends. If the stands of support, backing, and effective solidarity demonstrated in times of crises and hardships are added to friendship, this will not only raise the common cause between two parties. Nay, this will also promote the human sentiments of all of us. Then, the sense of gratitude becomes great. Here in Hungary, we feel very grateful to you, considering you real friends. We hope that our visit to your beautiful country will contribute to the materialization and enhancement of further understanding and cooperation between our two peoples.

I would like you, Your Excellency, the president, and dear comrade, to know that our Palestinian people view with respect and appreciation the persistent endeavors of your friendly people to defend their independence and national identity in this part of the world for hundreds of years. We bow with respect to the sacrifices that you have made so that you can celebrate this independence. Hence, we feel that you appreciate the Palestinian people's just national struggle and their protracted endeavors to realize their freedom and independence, defend their national identity, and vindicate justice and peace in a region that has been plagued by various forms of wars and aggression.

Your Excellency, the president, ladies and gentlemen: You are undoubtedly following the news of the tragic situation being experienced by the sons of our Palestinian people inside our occupied Palestinian territories because of the continuation of the Israeli occupation of our Palestinian and Arab territories and also because of the iron-fist and bone-breaking policies pursued by the Israeli Government, which has begun to escalate these measures with the aim of aborting their glorious popular intifadah [uprising] and depriving our people of exercising and regaining their human and political rights on their national soil.

Dear comrades and friends, you are well aware that an increasing number of martyrs fall, an additional number of people are detained, and our people's suffering and agonies are prolonged on a daily basis as a result of the state terrorism perpetrated by the Israeli Government. Despite the great sacrifices that they are making and the serious challenges that they are facing, our Palestinian people are determined to continue their just national struggle and their sweeping popular intifadah until the realization of victory, the termination of the Israeli occupation of our territories, and the attainment and realization of full national independence represented by the establishment of their independent Palestinian state on our Palestinian soil.

Besides, our people are also struggling with the aim of realizing freedom and peace for all peoples of our region. Our people have expressed their inclination toward and desire for peace in a clear and straightforward manner through the resolutions issued by the 19th extraordinary session of our Palestine National Council [PNC].

I explained these historic political resolutions to the international community in my speech to the UN General Assembly at its Palestine session at the UN Headquarters in Geneva in December. In that speech, we affirmed our commitment to international legitimacy and to the resolutions pertaining to the Palestine question and the Middle East conflict, including the Resolutions No 242 and 338, and our people's right to repatriation and self-determination. We also asserted in that speech the need to convene an effective international Middle East peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and all parties to the regional conflict, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of our people, which must attend that conference on an equal footing with the other parties.

The entire world has responded favorably to the Palestinian peace initiative and expressed its support and backing to the independent Palestinian state, which we proclaimed on 15 November 1988 at the conclusion of the meetings of our Algiers PNC session. More than 100 states have so far recognized the independent Palestinian state. Furthermore, the West European states as well as the United States have responded positively to our peace initiative through opening a serious and substantive dialogue with the PLO, which we view as an important, constructive, and positive step taken in the way of bolstering the efforts being exerted to convene an international peace conference, especially if we take into account the fact that the socialist bloc states, foremost among which is the friendly USSR, have been pursuing and continuing their active diplomatic moves seeking to bring about the convening of the international conference and realize peace in our region, along with the Arab states and the Nonaligned Movement's member states.

We believe in the importance of the peace based on justice and also in the importance of achieving this so that future generations can live in peace and security, without wars and threats of war, and to help realize the prosperity, welfare, and progress of our peoples.

It pleases me here to affirm our commitment to support all liberation movements throughout the world, especially those operating in South Africa and their people and the Namibian people, as well as the peoples of the African front-line states, which are struggling against the racist Pretoria regime, its aggressions, and its attacks.

We also salute the efforts being made to bring about a reduction in nuclear arms and medium-range and short-range missiles. Let us work together for the sake of creating a world free of these nuclear arms, a world permeated by peace, freedom, prosperity, and social progress.

'Arafat Meets With Nemeth

LD1703195189 Budapest MTI in English 1658 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Budapest, March 17 (MTI)—Miklos Nemeth, member of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Political Committee and chairman of the Council of Ministers, met on Friday in Budapest, Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Palestinian leader is on an official visit to Hungary at the invitation of Karoly Grosz, general secretary of the HSWP [Hungarian Socialist Workers Party].

Present at the talks between Mr Nemeth and Mr 'Arafat were Sulayman al-Najjab, member of the PLO Executive Committee and general secretary of the Palestinian Communist Party, Mamduh Nufal ['Umar Nufal 'Abd al-Rahim], member of the Political Committee of the

Democratic Front for the Liberation of the Palestine, and 'Abd al-Latif Abu Hijlah, deputy head of the Political Department of the PLO. From the Hungarian side, the talks were attended by Geza Kotai, head of the department for International Party Relations of the Central Committee, and Gabor Nagy, deputy foreign minister.

In introduction to the discussions, Mr Nemeth said that relations between Hungary and the PLO are good, and that contacts are characterized by openness, sincerity and solidarity. The prime minister noted that the Hungarian Government supports the enlivening international activity, the basis for which was provided by the speech of Mr 'Arafat in Geneva, and the resolutions of the Algiers session of the Palestinian National Council. Hungary's recognition for the declaration of the Palestinian state and agreement to elevate the Budapest representation of the PLO to the level of embassy indicates how the country relates to the Palestinian cause.

With respect to Hungary's international efforts, the prime minister stressed the openness of Hungary, noting that the country seeks not only its own advantage when building relations, but also keeps the interests of others—including the just efforts of the Palestinian people—in view. In this spirit, it raises its voice at talks with Israel, and with the various Jewish organizations, for the settlement of the Middle East situation by political means. In this context, Mr Nemeth noted that Hungary would gladly accept a mediating role, and supports, in proportion with its possibilities, the settlement process of the Middle East situation.

Reviewing bilateral relations, the prime minister also said that, according to the Hungarian evaluation, there are still many untapped opportunities in economic and cultural life.

Mr 'Arafat pointed out that he will continue to regard the Hungarian people as his friends. He appreciated the support with which Hungary assisted the just cause of the Palestinian people.

Evaluating the Middle East situation, he said the region resembles a powder barrel. The Palestinian leader said the events taking place in the region have a direct effect on the development of international life and therefore was of the opinion that a new way of thinking is needed in handling the Middle East situation. According to his position, the world's public should persuade Israel for a new approach to the problems. In this context he termed as useful the dialogue held with the Jewish communities outside Israel, which can help persuade the Shamir government to accept the fundamental principles of peaceful settlement.

The Palestinian leader termed it promising that a certain shift could be experienced in the Middle East policy of the United States. He expressed the hope that this tendency would prove lasting.

Mr 'Arafat voiced his view that the Israeli attacks are continuing against the Palestinian movement. According to the Palestinian evaluation, Israel is playing for time in connection with the proposals aimed at settling the Middle East situation, while the attention of the United States Government is tied down with the home political clashes. In this regard, Yasir 'Arafat held it necessary to convene, as soon as possible, an international peace conference for the settlement of the situation of the region. He fully agreed with the Soviet proposal that the conference should start in six to nine months.

On the request of Mr 'Arafat, the Hungarian Government gave the promise that it would organize the international conference.

After the talks with the Hungarian prime minister, the Budapest office of the Palestine Liberation Organization marked the occasion of the office being raised to the level of an embassy. The Palestinian national flag was hoisted at the embassy by Yasir 'Arafat.

'Arafat Speech to Conference

JN1803174089 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1605 GMT 18 Mar 89

["Full Text" of PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's address to the International Parliamentary Union—IPU—conference in Budapest on 17 March—read by announcer]

[Text] Mr Chairman of the 81st IPU [International Parliamentary Union] conference, Mr IPU chairman, members, it is a great honor for me to stand here before you in your capacity as the international parliamentarians defending world peace and the values of freedom, democracy, and human rights. Allow me to thank you from the bottom of my heart for this generous invitation to address you in the name of the Palestinian people and about their just struggle and dire need for your brave voice, which has always supported the peoples who struggle for freedom, independence, and against coercion, injustice, occupation, and racial discrimination. I also thank the Hungarian People's Republic, its friendly people, and its wise leadership, for its constructive role in maintaining world peace and in entrenching its pillars. Hungary's hosting of your esteemed conference is an expression of the active role friendly Hungary plays to achieve a world free of wars and permeated by amity and peace.

Mr Chairman, members, the successive important developments in the world during recent years prove our peoples' strong desire to build a world permeated by peace, freedom, security, stability, and social progress. In light of this, we believe that agreements on long-range missiles and on European security constitute a turning point in our contemporary world. The new detente between the USSR and the United States on issues of armament, security, and militarization of space and regional issues has created a positive atmosphere on the international level. We all can feel the results of this detente in the open-door policy and cooperation among various economic systems, whose first fruit was agreement on nuclear arms limitation and reaching peaceful solutions to several regional conflicts. Stopping the Iraq-Iran war, the agreement on Namibia, the agreement on Afghanistan, and the current talks on the Cypriot and Central American issues are living and important examples of the policy of the new international detente.

Esteemed gentlemen, we consider that what has so far been achieved on the regional and international levels constitutes a solid and firm basis for continuing to settle the remaining volatile and complicated international issues, which pose a true threat to the peace march. Unfortunately, there are still in our world regional and international forces that try by all means to obstruct the march of international detente and to keep the hotbeds of tension volatile, and that reject all international resolutions calling for peaceful solutions.

We sincerely believe that the IPU has a great role to play for the sake of world peace and for removing the hotbeds of tension, aggression, occupation, and racial discrimination. These hotbeds constitute a serious challenge to all mankind, to international detente, and to putting a final end to colonialism, aggression, and tyranny.

Mr Chairman, members: Currently, the Middle East is considered among the most dangerous regions of tension in the world. So far, there has been no agreement on this region, something that poses a threat to world security as a whole. Perhaps it is no secret to you that the Israeli leadership insists on maintaining its occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories. Moreover, this leadership rejects and defies all international resolutions and also rejects all international and local peace initiatives. Throughout the past years, the international community has exerted huge efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East. However, these efforts have been in vain given Israeli arrogance and the continued occupation, terrorism, repression, and tyranny pursued against the Palestinian people. Regrettably, this Israeli arrogance receives unlimited support from some European governments and from the U.S. Administration, thereby increasing Israeli arrogance and encouraging Israel to reject all peace initiatives.

Mr Chairman, members: Given the arrogance of power and organized state terrorism, our people have found no way other than to resist this occupation as well as this organized state terrorism, repression, and tyranny. No doubt, you are following up the epic of the Palestinian intifadah [uprising], which is considered a unique example in resisting occupation, injustice, and tyranny. This struggle, which is full of heroic deeds and sacrifices, shows the world how noble the Palestinian people are. It also shows their huge preparedness for sacrifice in order to end the Israeli occupation of their homeland and for the sake of freedom and independence.

The epic of the intifadah is now entering its 16th month, while our masses are more determined to achieve victory despite the brutality of Israeli repression. Our people's willpower will be more solid and powerful to end occupation and realize the national political rights of our Palestinian people in accordance with the international legitimacy and resolutions, led by their right to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr Chairman, members: You are men of justice and law, and you also defend the sanctity and supremacy of the law. In our country, Palestine, the simplest human rights are being violated, and our children and women are being killed with bullets and torture. Their bones are also being broken, and they are put in detention camps, where there are 31,000 prisoners. Banned gas bombs have aborted more than 3,600 pregnant women. This is in addition to our other losses since our people's intifadah. We have lost more than 650 martyrs, and 32,000 others were wounded, including 5,400 handicapped. Also, houses are either blown up or closed; Islamic and Christian sanctities are being attacked; schools and universities are closed; government hospitals are prevented from treating the injured; strugglers are deported from the homeland; and sieges, starvation, and high taxes are also imposed on our people. Other crimes condemned by the specialized international committees are also being committed.

It is the duty and responsibility of the protectors of the international legitimacy, the legislators, and the defenders of justice and human rights to expose this flagrant violation of human rights and the international charters and law in our Palestinian land under the Israeli occupation.

Mr Chairman, members: Sixteen months of our people's intifadah have removed the masks from the faces of Israel's rulers and also exposed the bitter facts about the Israeli occupation as well as the depth of the tragedy experienced by the Palestinian people under this brutal occupation and the crimes of its soldiers and officers and of the racists and heavily armed settlers. This is in addition to the continued Israeli aggressions against the Lebanese villages and the Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon represented in the air raids and the land and sea attacks since the Israeli invasion in 1982, during which thousands of our children and women fell victims.

Mr Chairman, members: Our Palestine National Council [PNC] session of intifadah in fraternal Algeria in November, 1988, issued historic and decisive resolutions to reach peace in Palestine and in the region. It also announced, in accordance with the international resolutions, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state; a state of the freedom of expression and free parties under the canopy of a democratic and parliamentary system; a state of social justice and civil rights regardless of race, religion, or color; a state with no discrimination between man and woman; a state of the supremacy of the law and the independent judiciary; a state of complete loyalty to Palestine's spiritual and cultural heritage through tolerence and coexistence among religions; and a state which has been recognized by more than 100 countries.

Our PNC has adopted the Fes Arab summit's project and the other international resolutions pertaining to Palestine as a basis for peace in the Middle East. These resolutions begin with Resolution 181 on partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish states through other international resolutions on the Palestine question and ending with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which are considered a basis for an effective international conference and a guarantee of the Palestinian people's political and national rights, including their rights to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

In my speech at the United Nations in Geneva in December, 1988, I stressed these historic resolutions, under which the General Assembly accepted the State of Palestine as an observer and approved the peace initiative and the need to convene a UN-sponsored interenational conference to be attended by the Security Council permanent member states and all the parties to the conflict in the region, including the PLO. This approval took place with a majority of 138 votes, including the EEC. It also condemned the Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

Mr Chairman: We consider the Palestinian peace initiative, which was launched by our PNC, to be a historic contribution by our people and their representatives to stop bloodshed and provide security, peace, and coexistence among all countries and peoples in the Middle East.

This initiative was welcomed and supported on the international level. On its basis, the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, which we consider a major step in order to achieve a permanent and just peace in the Middle East, began. Different international groups have shown explicit support for the Palestinian peace initiative—particularly the friends in the Soviet Union, the socialist countries, and the PRC; and also Japan and the EEC countries, whose representatives I had the honor to meet with in Madrid recently to discuss the best ways to convene the international conference and to achieve peace in the region. This was followed by my important meeting with Comrade Shevardnadze.

As you know, messrs, our friends and brothers in the Arab, Islamic, and African groups and the nonaligned countries have zealously supported the Palestinian peace initiative and backed it.

I urge all UN Security Council permanent member states to quickly agree among themselves on this international conference, end the dangerous stalemate in the region, and convene the preparatory committee for this conference according to the initiative of Presidents Gorbachev and Mitterrand or any other formula that they feel appropriate. I call on the United States to join its efforts with those of the Soviet Union, the PRC, France, and Britain for that goal in order to preserve the dynamism of the peace process in the Middle East.

The loss of this historic opportunity will leave serious negative effects on the whole situation in this region of the world, particularly as there are preparations under way by Israel and its agents to launch a war beginning from southern Lebanon to detonate the situation in the whole region in order to escape the internal dilemmas and to blow up the Palestinian peace initiative and the international efforts that aim to convene the international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Mr Chairman, members: There is a universal conviction now that it is the Palestinian question that holds the key to war and peace in the Middle East. All past attempts to bypass this pivotal issue in the dispute have only served to produce further wars and conflicts as well as to shed blood on both sides.

We in the PLO have declared our strategic line of establishing a just peace in the region. It is clear that, led by extremists, Israel is not interested in peace. Nor does it recognize new regional and global realities and changes. We in the PLO, in our capacity as the sole legitimate representative of our Palestinian people, are prepared to talk about and find solutions to all issues of the conflict and peace under the aegis of the international conference. We are confident that peace serves the interests of both the Palestinians and the Israelis as well as the region and the world. Hence, we stretch our hands to all the forces of peace in Israel so we cooperate toward building a just and overall peace in the region. I call upon the leaders of Israel to rise to the level of events in order that we may build this peace for the sake of the future of our and their children. The arrogance of power shall not guarantee security and stability. Only peace founded on justice and respect for the national, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their rights to self-determination and statehood can assure security, life, and stability for all.

Forfeiting this rare, historic opportunity combining historic circumstances, international detente, the regional circumstances, and the Palestinian peace initiative to arrive at a just, comprehensive settlement for this conflict that has persisted for 40-odd years will mean plunging the entire region into a destructive war—a war fed by all of our children—Arabs and Israelis, especially since arms and lethal military equipement, and long-range missiles are now stockpiled in the region. All the world may come to pay a heavy price for that.

Mr Chairman, members: You have a major role to play in the interest of world peace and against advocates of war and aggression. I call upon you from this forum to support the work of the international conference's committee so it moves at all levels with all of the parties in order to establish peace in Palestine and the region. I also call for the formation of a fact-finding parliamentary committee in our occupied land. I am confident that this meeting of yours in this friendly country will produce practical decisons and activities to enhance international detente in support of peace advocates and against the advocates of tension, aggression, and war. I also look forward to the day when the state of Palestine takes up its seat as a full member of your esteemed union. I wish your conference every success.

'Arafat Holds News Conference

LD1703224789 Budapest MTI in English 2105 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Budapest, March 17 (MTI)—Before leaving Budapest, PLO Leader Yasir 'Arafat held an international press conference on Friday.

Summing up Mr 'Arafat's visit to Hungary, Laszlo Major, HSWP [Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party] spokesman, said that it was reconfirmed in the course of talks with the Hungarian leaders that only a U.N. peace conference could grant a lasting and just settlement of the Middle East situation for all states of the region. According to the Hungarian position, the peace conference should be attended by all parties concerned, including the permanent members of the Security Council and the representatives of the PLO and Israel. The decisions of the conference should take the security interest of all countries in the region into account. The spokesman said that the Hungarian side welcomed the flexible Palestinian proposals for a Middle East settlement and the realistic and circumspect standpoint of the PLO. He repeatedly emphasized that the Hungarian People's Republic and the HSWP would remain in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people.

In reply to questions, Yasir 'Arafat referred to the major role played by the U.N. Security Council in the settlement of the Iraq-Iran conflict. He said that the community of United Nations had shown it was capable of solving a sensitive issue.

The PLO leader said that the visit to the Middle East of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was "an important event that provided great assistance in making an advance toward peace in the Middle East". Asked about the establishment of relations between Hungary and Israel, Mr 'Arafat said that he would not like to interfere with the internal affairs of any country and it is the sovereign right of every state to maintain relations.

'Arafat Seen Off by Grosz

LD1703195489 Budapest MTI in English 1828 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Budapest, March 17 (MTI)—Concluding his official visit, Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, left Hungary Friday in the afternoon. At Budapest's Ferihegy Airport, the Palestinian leader was seen off by Karoly Grosz, general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

'Arafat Arrives in Czechoslovakia on Visit

Met by Lenart

LD1703225589 Prague CTK in English 2101 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Prague March 17 (CTK)—Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee Yasir 'Arafat arrived here today for a short working visit to Czechoslovakia. He was welcomed at Ruzyne Airport by Czechoslovak Communist Party Presidium Member and Central Committee Secretary Jozef Lenart.

Czechoslovak Communist Party General Secretary Milos Jakes received Yasir 'Arafat shortly after his arrival. The two representatives exchanged views on international questions, putting emphasis on the situation in the Middle East and the problems of cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the PLO.

The talks took place in a friendly atmosphere of full understanding and identity of opinions on the questions discussed. Both sides expressed interest in further extension and development of Czechoslovak-Palestinian relations.

Gives Interview to CSSR TV

LD1803195789 Prague CTK in English 1722 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Prague March 18 (CTK)—Visiting Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee Yasir 'Arafat stressed here today that the PLO will continue its strategic policy adopted at a session of the Palestine National Council in Algiers last November until real peace is reached and a peace territory of Palestine created.

In an interview to Czechoslovak television at the end of his short visit to Czechoslovakia, Yasir 'Arafat stressed that Israel will obviously follow its extremist and fanatical religious groups which have intensified their activity. At the same time, however, we can see that Israeli democratic, progressive peace forces are being activated. A total of 54 percent of Israeli citizens are for a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization, for reaching peace, and this is very important.

The fact that the Israelis, Palestinians and Europeans negotiated together and established a dialogue at last year's model conference in Prague and similar events which followed in Paris, Liverpool and Washington is also an important signal which is at the same time an encouragement for all peace processes and all peace movements in Israel to continue to strive for reaching a real peace.

After the publication of the Palestinian peace initiative the PLO found itself face to face to the escalation of the policy of suppression on the part of the Israeli occupation army. During the 15-month-long popular uprising, more than 650 Palestinians were killed, 32,000 people wounded and 5,400 crippled. Some 30,000 Palestinians are held in concentration camps and thousands of Palestinian houses were destroyed. Palestinian basic and secondary schools as well as universities have been closed for the second year.

Asked about the results of dialogue between the PLO and U.S. diplomacy, Yasir 'Arafat said that the new U.S. Administration agreed to continue the dialogue. The second round of talks begins in the Tunisian capital in the next few days, meanwhile consultations between PLO and U.S. ambassadors continued in Tunisia. "It is our wish to include in the agenda the speeding up of peace processes, including the convocation of an international Middle East conference under the auspices of the U.N. with the participation of five members of the U.N. Security Council and all parties concerned including the PLO."

The PLO chairman further said that "the intifadah [uprising] will continue until the end of Israeli occupation". The general atmosphere in the world becomes favourable for the understanding of realities and facts. It is more and more revealed how the Palestinian people suffer under the Israeli aggression, Yasir 'Arafat stressed.

Ends Working Visit

LD1803131889 Prague CTK in English 1253 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Prague March 18 (CTK)—Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization Yasir 'Arafat today ended his short working visit to Czechoslovakia.

He was seen off at Prague airport by Czechoslovak Communist Party Presidium member and Central Committee Secretary Jozef Lenart.

Algeria

Syria's Al-Asad Arrives, Makes Statement

LD1803214789 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In a statement made to journalists in the airport's VIP lounge, President Hafiz al-Asad specified the aims of his visit to Algeria. He said:

[Begin Al-Asad recording] Because of the many ties binding Syria and Algeria and the good and fraternal relations that have existed for a long time between Syrian and Algerian leaders, we would like to meet frequently to review the issues that are most important to us, our region, and to our Arab nation. This is in addition to reviewing international events. We try to act together based on mutual understanding, which we normally reach. This time, as every time, we will try to review issues, developments, and matters that interest, as I said, the peoples and masses in both our countries and in the Arab homeland in general.

I will be happy to exchange views with my brother President Chadli Bendjedid on the various issues. I am very happy to visit fraternal Algeria. [end recording]

Meets With Bendjedid

LD1803215689 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Private talks between presidents Chadli Bendjedid and Hafiz al-Asad began today at noon at the Villa Djenane el Mufti. The talks were expanded to include members of the two delegations.

This afternoon, the political talks between the two presidents, Chadli Bendjedid and Hafiz al-Asad, were resumed at a further meeting at the Villa Djenane el Mufti. The session lasted for more than an hour. After the talks, President Chadli Bendjedid provided a luncheon banquet in honor of Algeria's guest, President Hafiz al-Asad and his delegation.

Among the Algerian and Syrian officials gathered for talks this evening at Villa Djenane el Mufti were: Abdelhamid Mehri, secretary general of the National Liberation Front Central Committee; Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh; and Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam.

Further Talks Held 18 Mar

JN1803214589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Algiers—President Hafiz al-Asad and Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid held a second closed meeting at the president's place of residence in Algiers at 2015 Damascus time today.

In this meeting, the two presidents completed discussions on topics raised in the previous two meetings. President Hafiz al-Asad and Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid held a closed meeting at 1520 earlier today. The two presidents' talks centered on all aspects of the situation in the region as well as the latest developments in Arab affairs, issues of mutual concern, and bilateral relations. The two presidents stressed the need for a unified Arab stand that puts Arab capabilities at the service of the Arab nation's causes and pan-Arab interests to combat the hostile schemes against it.

The two presidents also held a meeting at the president's place of residence in Algiers. The meeting was attended by members of the Syrian Arab delegation accompanying the president, comprising 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, vice president of the Republic; Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; and Daniel Ni'mah and Safwan Qudsi, members of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front. The meeting was attended on the Algerian side by 'Abd al-Hamid Mahri, secretary general of the Liberation Front Central Committee; Boualem Bessaieh, foreign minister; Al-'Arabi Balkhayr, director of the Presidency's office; and Mawlud Hamrush, secretary general at the presidency.

Egypt

Mubarak Returns From European Tour 17 Mar

NC1703222489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2212 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak returned home tonight after a 9-day European tour that took him to Belgium, the Netherlands, the FRG, and France.

Mubarak Speaks at Tabah Flag Raising Ceremony

NC1903124989 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1138 GMT 19 Mar 89

[President Husni Mubarak's speech at the ceremony marking the return of Tabah to Egyptian sovereignty and the hoisting of Egypt's flag over the area—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Brother citizens it is with Almighty God's will that we are today experiencing together this immortal moment in Egypt's history. Egypt's flag has been hoisted over the soil of Tabah. Egypt's flag will never be pulled down. Egypt's flag will remain high and fluttering, with God's blessings. [applause] It will remain the symbol of the freedom for whose sake we have sacrificed our lives. It will remain an expression of the Egyptian people's full sovereignty over the soil of Egypt: the noble Egypt; the capable Egypt; the Egypt of strength, glory, and pride; the Egypt of civilization, tradition, and history of generations; the Egypt of peace.

At these historic moments in Egypt's history, I address the people of the world and declare with confidence and belief that world peace will never be the impossible goal. Peace is the noble aim which man can achieve anytime and anywhere. Egypt and its people have proved that the man who is capable of waging war is also capable of making peace. The world has had enough big catastrophes so that throughout the ages there has not been a family without a martyr, a building without damage, and eyes without tears weeping over the ruins. The peoples' will has become clear everywhere. They want peace as a permanent goal, and they seek to achieve it and care for it. The shadows of big and small wars can only be confronted by this great collective will struggling to make life. Peace is not a chance to take breath, or a hand extended while the other hand conceals daggers behind backs. Peace is not a slogan that we raise today, and then use tricks to foil tomorrow. Peace is a constant stand around which all peace-loving forces rally. It is a permanent and confident decision that war will not be a way of dealing between a human being and his brothers in humanity.

Peace that mankind aspires to and needs is one that is lasting and based on justice. The final outcome of any war is destruction and devastation and killed men whom God creates to live, work, produce, and enjoy life. It is orphaned children, whom God creates to enjoy life in happy, loving, and warm families. War is blood and tears and, in the end, there will be no conquerer or conquered. Man will be the conquered here or there. This is our creed in which we believed when we signed the documents of peace. It is also our creed in which we believe while striving to safeguard peace.

Those who live with the mentality that war is what safeguards their interests and existence do not heed history's wisdom, and they do not express the pulse of their people at all. The leaders of the great powers realize this fact, and they are now taking steps to the fields of peace. The Egyptian people support these steps and wish them every success. It remains for world public opinion to be unified so that it may become the greatest power that can save mankind's constant and ever-increasing worry and fear of devastation that might destroy all mankind. We call for unity of action among all peace-loving forces on every spot on earth. In our call for peace there is no difference between race, color, or religion. The call of peace is an appeal by all minds and hearts and the single voice of all peoples. It is a covenant of human civilization represented in the words of thinkers, mission of artists, responsibility of the cultured, and the positive attitude of every leadership.

There will be no war after today. This is the hope which lives in every heart, in the big state, in the far away island, in the unknown village on a world map. Why shouldn't this hope be translated into reality?

I allow myself to reiterate, as we celebrate the completion of the peace structure on our territory, that world peace will never be an impossible goal. The weapons of peace are honest will, faith, and determination. They are concerted efforts, understanding, patience, and wisdom. They are detached from short-lived ambitions. They are confidence in the ability to defend peace. I think that the people and their leaders possess these weapons. As we approach the beginning of the 21st century, mankind is facing numerous wars—but they are wars of a different kind. They are wars that do not lead to disasters and destruction. They are wars to protect mankind from the terrifying natural dangers which threaten it with food shortages and which destroy millions because of starvation, draught, epidemics, and a decrease in the standard of living.

An enormous struggle is awaiting mankind in order to protect the poor and save its victims who had been deprived of their basic rights to dignified life and even the simplest life. This is the peace struggle; this is the greatest struggle.

Compatriots, these ideas fill my heart as I speak to all the peoples of the world in these immortal moments of our history and as we raise Egypt's banner—the banner of peace, the peace which lives in us and through us as a firm and unshakable belief, God willing. God is our guide, God is our protector. May God grant us success. God's peace and blessings be upon you. [applause]

Israel's Weizman Urges Negotiations With PLO

NC1903103789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1025 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—'Ezer Weizman, Israel's minister of Science and Research, stressed on arrival in Cairo today the need to negotiate with the PLO.

In a statement he made at Cairo airport, Weizman referred to the need to discuss the next steps for achieving peace in the Middle East, particularly the Palestinian issue. He expressed pleasure with visiting Cairo 10 years after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. He said that this visit coincides with the resolution of the Tabah issue—the last problem to be solved between Egypt and Israel.

Weizman will attend a seminar to be held tomorrow in Cairo to mark the passage of 10 years on the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. A number of Egyptian politicians and diplomats will take part in the seminar.

Sudan

Distribution of Ministerial Portfolios Decided

EA1703190789 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1245 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The joint committee of the Ummah and Democratic Unionist parties, looking into the distribution of ministerial portfolios, has finished its work and submitted its recommendations and decisions to the leaders of the two parties. The new government will be announced tomorrow, Saturday.

An authoritive source on the committee told the press yesterday that agreement had been reached on the distribution of ministerial portfolios and criteria for choosing ministers. The ministries of agriculture and labor have been entrusted to the "modern forces". The Ministry of Defence will go to a national personality to be agreed upon. Two national personalities outside the assembly, one of them from the north and the other from the south, will be chosen to fill the two portfolios of animal resources, and public service and administrative reform.

The source added that agreement had been reached on giving the Ministry of Health to the left-wing representation inside the assembly. Agreement had not been reached on the portfolio of minister of interior, but a recommendation had been submitted to the leaders of the two parties.

The source said that the Ministries of Trade, Cooperation and Supply, Energy and Mining, Education, the Attorney General's office, Works and Housing and Presidency Affairs, had been allocated to the Ummah party. The Ministries of Domestic and Foreign Trade have been merged.

He said that the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economic Planning, Industry, and Information and Social Welfare had been allocated to the Democratic Unionist Party. He added that four ministerial portfolios have been allocated to the southern parties. They are the Ministries of Regional Coordination, Youth and Sports, Transport and Communications, Irrigation and Water Resources. The Ministry of Tourism and Hotels has been allocated to the Sudanese National Party.

The source said that it had been agreed to appoint four ministers of state only, two from each party. Regarding regional government, agreement has been reached on appointing governors and deputy governors only. The other regional ministries will be abolished. The previous distribution of these posts will be adhered to. The administration of the regions will be a partnership between the governor and his deputy.

The source explained that it had been agreed that local elections should be held immediately to fill the vacuum in the regions. It was agreed that regional governments in the north and south should be dissolved. [passage omitted]

'Disagreements' Delay New Government Announcement

NC1803212989 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has canceled the press conference that he had been scheduled to hold today to announce the formation of a new Sudanese government and to declare his commitment to end the war with the southern Sudanese rebels. According to sources close to the negotiations over formation of a new government, the postponement of the announcement has been caused by persistent disagreements over the distribution of ministerial portfolios between the Al-Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party.

Sources Cited on Delay

JN1903121889 Baghdad INA in English 1145 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, Mar. 19, INA—A new proposal tabled by the Sudanese leader of Al-Ummah Party al-Sadiq al-Mahdi on forming a government of political minorities threatens with aggravating the ministerial crisis and intensifying conflict among major parties in Sudan.

Informed sources told INA correspondent in Khartoum that Al-Mahdi's proposal aims at appeasing his party's major ally, the Islamic Front and aborting the phased program of other political parties and trade unions, presented earlier this month.

The Islamic Front was the only political party that rejected this program and also refused to participate in a coalition government based on it. The phased program depends on setting up a national coalition government and resolving the problem of south Sudan in accordance with the agreement signed by the Democratic Unionist Party with the southern opposition parties.

The sources added that Al-Ummah (the nation) party exerts strenuous efforts to counter passive reactions created by Mr. Al-Mahdi's attempt to form the government of minorities.

The party's secretary, 'Umar Nur al-Da'im, attributed the delay of announcing the formation of the new coalition government to the so many parties and trade unions with which contacts and consultations [as received] carried out.

The Islamic Front, which occupies 50 seats in the Constituent Assembly and in which Al-Ummah Party enjoys a majority, however, supports Al-Mahdi's endeavour to form a government of political minorities. The Front executive leadership member, Musa Gharar, yesterday said the Front would back the minorities government and would not work for its downfall.

The Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party, meanwhile, stressed categoric rejection to the idea of forming the minorities government through a statement by member of the party's politburo, Muhammad al-Hasan Yasin, to INA corespondent in which he said that the new government requires strong elements to fight corruption and interpret the phased program into a tangible reality.

Last night, the party held a plenary session during which it reviewed results of the consultations it had had with Sudanese unionist and political forces.

Mr. Al-Mahdi and leader of the Democratic Unionist Party Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani are scheduled to meet here later today to discuss the results reached by their parties in the consultations for forming the new government.

Al-Mahdi Downplays Differences With DUP

NC1903162089 Paris AFP in English 1553 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Khartoum, March 19 (AFP)—Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi downplayed differences between his Al-Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Sunday regarding the share-out of major ministerial portfolios in a government of national unity he is seeking to form.

In a press statement, he said Al-Ummah's relations with the DUP were "good" and that delays in forming a broad-based government were due to a concern to set up an administration satisfying all Sudanese people. A government without the DUP would not be "logical", he said.

Saying he accepted the idea of a ceasefire in the civil war in the south, Mr. Al-Mahdi argued that an end to fighting between the Sudanese Army and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by Colonel John Garang would help bring aboput a constitutional conference.

The southern-based rebels and a number of other political forces in Sudan want such a conference, bringing together all groups, to tackle fundamental questions such as church-state relations and the country's Arabic or black African identity.

The prime minister said he had replied positively to a U.N. appeal for a one-month ceasefire to ensure security for efforts to bring relief aid to the south, and that he was awaiting the response of the SPLA to examine ways of putting into effect a ceasefire from April 1.

Sources involved in negotiations between Al-Ummah and the DUP say differences between them over how to share out the ministerial posts have compromised Mr. Al-Mahdi's attempts to form a broad government, which was due to have been announced Saturday. [passage omitted]

Two Major Parties Reportedly Nearing Agreement

EA1903192889 Khartoum SUNA in French 1540 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 19th March SUNA—The two largest parties in Sudan's Constituent Assembly (parliament)—the Ummah and the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP]-have reached an agreement to resolve minor disagreements on the allocation of ministerial portfolios in the next government. The two parties agreed to hold a joint meeting on Monday 20th March in the presence of the six-member commission charged with allocating the portfolios in the new government of national unity in order to add the finishing touches to the government in order to announce it on Tuesday 21 March.

The two party leaders—Mr Sadiq al-Mahdi and Mr Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani—met on Sunday to review the results of the efforts of the six-member commission and the consultations between Mr al-Mahdi and the political parties and unions which have signed the transitional program.

Joint Committee To Implement Army Memorandum

EA1903192089 Khartoum SUNA in French 1510 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 19th March SUNA—The Supreme State Council has decided to establish a high committee comprising representatives of the Armed Forces, the Supreme State Council, and the prime minister to implement the memorandum recently presented by the army to the Supreme State Council and the prime minister, the daily AL-AYYAM reported on Sunday.

The paper added that, according to a well-informed military source, the formation of a minority government is contrary to the Armed Forces memorandum and the transitional program signed by the political parties and the unions.

Radio SPLA on Capture of Mongalla Garrison

EA1703184889 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The strategic garrison town of Mongalla fell to the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army [SPLA] forces of Bright Star campaign this morning at 0630 hours 17th March 1989, after 36 hours of continuous heavy fighting. This is the sixth garrison to fall to the SPLA in the last 6 weeks. These garrisons are: Torit, Liria, Farajok, Nimule, Jummayzah and now Mongalla.

Details of the capture of each of these garrisons will be announced eventually, but it is worth mentioning that the SPLA has captured more than 10 tanks, more than 25 pieces of heavy artillery and heavy machine guns, a great amount of small arms, and more than 500 hundred POW's, including 12 officers.

Mongalla was the old capital of southern Sudan during the early colonial days. It falls about 45 miles or 72 km north of Juba on the River Nile.

With Mongalla and Jummayzah now firmly in SPLA hands, Bor is completely cut off, being 120 miles or 172 km north of Juba. The Bright Star campaign commander here gives a very strong warning to the garrison of Bor to withdraw immediately without delay. If they do so, SPLA will give them free passage to move with their arms. This must be coordinated with the zonal commander, Comrade Kuol Manyang Juk. Otherwise, the garrison in Bor will be destroyed in the next few days.

Those in Bor must be realistic. No rescue will come to them from Juba. Juba itself is threatened and has no capability to rescue Bor. They—those of Bor garrison—must also know that no reinforcement or rescue will come to them from Malakal. The SPLA is aware that the Bor garrison is being promised rescue from here and there, but these are impossibilities.

Our SPLA internal cell at the General Headquarters, Khartoum, has given us full details of the force the General Headquarters is trying to move through Kosti to Malakal and from there to Bor. We are monitoring the movement of this force. We know where it is today. We want to underline to those at Bor garrison that this force will never reach them. After Torit, Liria, Farajok, Nimule, Jummayzah and Mongalla, those of Bor garrison must not allow themselves to be deceived. They must either join the SPLA or evacuate, and this is to be done immediately.

Worshipers March to UK Embassy, Denounce Rushdie

NC1703143189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Mar (MENA)—Large numbers of worshipers marched to the Sudanese cabinet seat and the British Embassy in Khartoum after Friday prayers today, to denounce British writer Salman Rushdie, author of the controversial book "The Satanic Verses."

The worshipers strongly attacked the British author, demanding that a strict stand be taken against him.

Strict security measures have been adopted in the Sudanese capital since this morning. The police forces deployed in the vicinity of the UK Embassy, blocking traffic along the roads leading to the cabinet headquarters and the embassy building.

In another development, 39 of the imams of Khartoum mosques have sent urgent messages to Muslim countries' foreign ministers, appealing to them to take a firm stand against Salman Rushdie and the British Government.

Tunisia

Syrian President Arrives in Tunis 19 Mar

LD1903125289 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Tunis from Algeria a short time ago. He was received at Tunis-Carthage International Airport by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The Syrian president's delegation includes Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam.

In a statement to Tunisian radio and TV, President Hafiz al-Asad said he was looking forward to his visit to Tunisia and that he came to discuss the current international situation and issues of mutual interest with President Ben Ali.

Makes Arrival Statement

JN1903145389 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1315 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Tunis at 1230 Damascus time today on a working visit. He was accorded a grand official reception at Tunis international airport, headed by Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The Tunisian president welcomed the president at the steps of the airplane. The two presidents then moved to the dais of honor where the Syrian and Tunisian national anthems were played.

In a statement to Tunisian television in the VIP lounge, President Hafiz al-Asad said: Tunisia is a sisterly Arab country that has played a prominent role in Arab history. All Arabs throughout history are aware of Tunisia's link with the Arabs in general and with Syria in in particular. We always expected—and still expect—our Arab people in Tunisia to continue to play their effective pan-Arab role, which they are playing at a prosperous and great epoch in Arab and Islamic history. Relations between Syria and Tunisia are based on broad pan-Arab historical ties and we—officials or the people—must meet frequently. With this in mind, I have wanted to pay a short visit to Tunisia for some time. I hope I can make a longer visit in the future to meet with brother President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and exchange views with him on issues concerning the two sisterly countries and our Arab nation in general. We are motivated by hope and and we will certainly fulfill our hopes by always arriving at common opinions and objectives regarding all pan-Arab and regional issues, whether at this meeting or in future meetings.

I am very pleased to be in sisterly Tunisia. I send to our Arab people in Tunisia, and through you, the greetings of the Arab people in Syria. I am grateful for the warm reception accorded to us on arrival in sisterly Tunisia.

The two presidents and the Syrian delegation then left in an official motorcade for the guest palace in Al-Marsa, a suburb of Tunis.

The president left Algiers earlier today. Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid accompanied him from his place of residence in Algiers to Houari Boumedienne International Airport, where he was accorded an official send-off.

Holds Talks With Ben Ali

JN1903155789 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tunis—President Hafiz al-Asad and Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali held a closed meeting at the presidential palace in Tunis today at 1400 Damascus time.

Talks centered on new Middle East developments in terms of the current international situation, Arab affairs, inter-Arab relations, and the efforts to develop an effective Arab position to counter schemes hostile to pan-Arab interests and to defend the Arab nation's rights and future.

Departs Tunis 19 Mar

LD1903184489 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad left Tunisia this afternoon following a short visit to our country. During his visit he held talks with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who saw his guest off at Carthage-Tunis International Airport. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Defense Minister Interviewed on Current Policy

LD2003093789 Kuwait KUNA in English 0802 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 20 (KUNA)—Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad has said that Kuwait's defense policy is to diversify its weapon sources giving it more freedom and making the experts' mission end as soon as it trains the Army to handle the new weapons.

In an exclusive interview with English language daily "KUWAIT TIMES" on Monday, Shaykh Nawwaf added that Kuwait was continuously working to enhance its army and to diversify its armaments sources. He indicated that it had earmarked a large budget for that specific purpose.

While Kuwait stood firmly for peace, there was readiness for war, the defense minister said.

Regarding the Air Force training, the defense minister said Kuwait is working hard to strengthen its Air Force by training its personnel in many countries and by providing the Kuwaiti Air Force with the most sophisticated airplanes.

On nuclear disarmament, Kuwait holds out hope of nuclear-free world, he added.

The Gulf waters have been secure and safe for shipping after the cessation of the Iraq-Iran war and work is going on to clear the war debris, the Kuwaiti minister said.

On restriction of fishing, Shaykh Nawwaf said "Some areas were declared banned for fishing in the interest of public safety and security of the country and its citizens."

The minister said the time has not come yet to recruit Kuwaiti girls for the Army.

Oil Minister on Exploration, Investment Abroad

LD2003101689 Kuwait KUNA in English 0827 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 20 (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Oil Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah al-'Adhbi said that Kuwait's oil exploration and investment abroad in addition to owning petrol stations outside Kuwait is for strategic purposes which aim at expanding the Kuwaiti oil base and provide ways for partial sales of its oil products.

Al-'Adhbi in an interview with monthly "AL-'ARABI" magazine, to be published here in April, said that Kuwait develops its oil refineries to make their capacity reach 750,000 barrels per day to secure an international market for its products in spite of fluctuations in prices and the situation of the market.

He noted that "we do not want to be under the mercy of oil companies" that purchase crude or refined oil at reduced prices that hurt the market stability.

He explained that the presence of Kuwaiti oil products and ownership of petrol stations in Europe under the fame of "Q8" enables Kuwait to play a competitive role in a free and open market.

He announced that Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) does not want to expand its "Q8" investments in the Arab market, noting that distributing Kuwaiti petroleum products in Arab countries is very limited but this will not stop Kuwait from investing in any Arab country, the circumstances of which allow such investment.

Shaykh 'Ali said that KPC has an oil concession in Egypt and has started production in "Amal" oil field in the Suez Gulf at the capacity of 7,000 barrels per day. He also noted that KPC also has oil concessions in Tunisia, but no oil was found in commercial quantities there and in Sudan but due to the civil war in the south the operations are halted every now and then.

Shaykh 'Ali said that KPC has concessions in People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and "We are negotiating with Yemen Arab Republic on means of cooperation (in the oil field)".

Chinese Deputy Premier Departs for UAE

LD1603175689 Kuwait KUNA in English 1336 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 16 (KUNA)—Chinese deputy premier, Tian Jiyun, and the accompanying delegation Thursday left Kuwait for the United Arab Emirates at the conclusion of a two-day official visit.

He was seen off at the airport by commerce and industry minister, Faysal 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Khalid and the Chinese ambassador to Kuwait.

In a pre-departure statement to KUNA, the Chinese guest expressed satisfaction at "the fruitful outcome" of talks with Kuwait leaders and officials.

The focus of the exchanges, the top Chinese officials pointed out, was the need for expanding and strengthening bilateral cooperative ties between the two friendly countries.

Paper Condemns Traitors, Hails State's Security

JN1803140689 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 16 Mar 89 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "Swimmers Against the Tide"]

[Text] Kuwait is the homeland of love, happiness, and prosperity. A strong Kuwait is strong due to the love binding its sons, their loyalty, and sacrifices for its sake.

Kuwait is the sanctuary and haven of all those who have done honest deeds, had noble objectives, and sought through effort, sweat, and hard work to contribute toward elevating the bases of the blessed renaissance on this good land.

The Kuwaitis, by their nature, their upbringing, and the principles and values they inherited and preserved, do not know rancor and do not hate anyone. They are peace-loving, cooperative, and peaceful individuals joined together by family ties and united by bonds of friendship and inherited tradition.

Perhaps this is the reason which makes the Kuwaitis, despite their small number, an example of cooperation, unity, and support for each other, especially during times of crisis, disaster, or emergency. Kuwaiti ancient and contemporary history is full of images affirming that Kuwait was and still is a unified nation, a society where differences vanish, discrimintion melts, the colors of giving and sacrifices meet at its borders, and where throughout the country the tunes of loyalty and faithfulness resound.

Despite that, there is a small number of people who are blinded by hatred and have no grace of unity and closeness. They have sold themselves to the devil. They constitute a minority in our Kuwaiti society. Therefore, they are known by all because they isolated themselves, chose the evil road to achieve their goals, and proceeded down the narrowest and most fatal channels to realize cheap aims and benefits.

Those people were not satisfied with their isolation from their society, but turned themselves into a tool in the hands of others to foster back-biting grudges between the members of one family. However, they have fallen into the trap of their own evil and revealed their isolation and estrangement from the homeland that adopted them with care and protection, provided them with the bases to make them good citizens, and opened the doors of honest work in all fields and at the highest levels of specialization.

However, hatred does terrible things. It ruins thought, destroys the body, blinds the eyes, and leads its owner to a true death.

This is the case of the evil people who conspire over the security of the nation and the citizens. They ally themselves with evil against good and death against life. In our country, we do not know the likes of these. We never heard of their existence until recently. Among them, there are some individuals who believed they could shake the bases with a flysheet or change the entrenched constants by a stupid or destructive act.

But why do the likes of these fall into the trap? Why do they lose their clear vision and the sound national feeling?

It is the loss and isolation from the society's hopes and aspirations. The important thing is to behave properly and know how to deal with the evil ones before we all get lost and sink.

Oman

Iranian Minister Arrives, Makes Statement

JN1403135989 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Text] His Excellency Behzad Nabavi, minister of heavy industries of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the delegation accompanying him arrived on a 4-day official visit to the Sultanate.

In an arrival statement, his excellency said that the visit is taking place at the invitation of His Excellency Salim ibn 'Abdallah al-Ghazali, Omani minister of industry and commerce, to attend the opening of the Iranian heavy industries display in the center of Oman at the Al-Sib exhibition. He added that he will head his country's delegation at the meeting of the Omani-Iranian joint committee, which will begin work tomorrow morning. He also explained that the Iranian exhibition will display Iranian industries and will provide a good start for industrial and economic cooperation between the two friendly countries.

His Excellency Behzad Nabavi and his delegation were received at the airport by Salim ibn 'Abdallah al-Ghazali, minister of industry and commerce; His Excellency Dr al-Yaqzan ibn Talib al-Hana'i, under secretary at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce; his excellency the Iranian ambassador to the Sultanate; and several officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

Received by Sultan Qabus

JN1503134889 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id received at his office in his majesty's palace in Salalah today His Excellency Behzad Nabavi, minister of heavy industries of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The meeting was attended by Industry and Commerce Minister Salim ibn 'Abdallah al-Ghazali and the Iranian ambassador accredited to the Sultanate.

Joint Committee Ends Meetings

JN1703101089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0810 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Muscat, 17 Mar (WAKH)—The session of talks held by the joint Omani-Iranian committee ended here this morning. The Omani side to the session was led by Industry and Commerce Minister Salim ibn 'Abdallah al-Ghazali, while the Iranian side was led by Heavy Industries Minister Behzad Nabavi. During the session, they discussed the consolidation of trade and economic cooperation between Oman and Iran.

It is noteworthy that the Iranian minister has been on a visit to Muscat since Tuesday to lead his country's delegation to the meetings of the joint Omani-Iranian committee and to open the Iranian heavy industries fair.

Iraqi Official Says Missiles Can Hit Tel Aviv

NC1803120189 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In Al-Manamah, Taha al-Qaysi, Iraqi ambassador accredited to Bahrain, emphasized to the Bahraini paper AL-AYYAM today that Iraq has surface-to-surface missiles that are capable of attacking vital targets inside Tel Aviv in Israel. He said that these missiles are to deter Israel from imposing its authority on the Arab states.

The ambassador affirmed that Iraq's stand on a possible Israeli attack will be completely different from the stand it adopted when the Israeli aircraft destroyed the Iraqi nuclear center in Tammuz.

Paper Examines U.S. Foreign Debt Proposal

JN1703160489 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 15 Mar 89 p 2

[Article by Rafid Haddad: "Foreign Debts: The Problem and the Repercussions"]

[Excerpts] The problem of foreign debt is not new to the world economy, especially in the Third World. However, this problem is coming back into the limelight now, as it has started to generate a series of crises with serious consequences for Third World states.

The debt issue has become a worrying threat to Third World governments as it has prevented the implementation of development projects in these states and has pushed their national economies into a state of constant danger and continual near-collapse.

The important point is that these debts and their negative effects on the economy have begun to create great political and social effects whose seriousness cannot be ignored.

There is no doubt that the recent bloody events in Venezuela, in which scores of people have fallen, and similar incidents in other Latin American countries and in Algeria, bear witness to our claim. This is because the economy has become a prime factor pushing the situation to the point of explosion. This has happened because the starving and poor have increased in number and the solutions proposed are weak and incapable against the international monopolies. Paying the interest on the debt breaks the back of these economies and eliminates a major percentage of national production and income. [passage omitted]

The Third World states in this situation have submitted numerous proposals and solutions to the problem, but all their efforts have been in vain because their recommendations have conflicted with the interests of the large industrial nations, rendering these proposals and solutions lifeless and stillborn.

The United States has announced a new initiative, under which it has abandoned the policy of demanding that developing nations repay their basic debts at the expense of economic growth and reforms. According to this initiative, the United States proposes that the funds of international lending agencies and bodies be used to alleviate the heavy burden of these debts, which amount to $1.3 trillion.

This plan, which was drawn up by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, marks a definite departure from previous U.S. policy, which used to reject the reduction of debts and to stress private sector borrowing and economic reforms by debtor nations.

The reaction of creditors and debtors to this plan has been positive. However, this plan remains ink on paper. To make it succeed, the following must be done:

—The details of the plan must be formulated and agreement must be reached on the terms of its implementation through expanded meetings and discussions with the debtor nations.

—The large industrial nations must express their good faith through substantive measures. This means that these nations abandon their "lust" for exploitation, which has been plaguing them. It also means that these industrial nations make "sacrifices," even if they are simple ones in favor of the developing nations.

—The economic aspect must be separated from attempts to achieve political "gains" at the expense of the Third World states. This is an important point, which must be taken into account and considered, as the industrial nations are seeking to continue their control over developing nations, given the weakness of the developing nations caused by the economic hegemony imposed on them by the industrial nations. These things must be taken into consideration and tackled before any step is taken—otherwise, we are building "sand castles."

Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Baghdad 19 Mar

JN1903080289 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0700 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Mar (INA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived here early this morning on a visit of several days to Iraq.

Tariq 'Aziz Returns From Riyadh ICO Meeting

JN1703124589 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Interview with Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on his return from the Islamic Conference Organization meeting in Riyadh, by unidentified reporter at Baghdad airport—date not given]

[Text] [Begin recording] [Correspondent] Your Excellency the Minister, we would like you to assess for us the most important results of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers conference held in Saudi Arabia.

['Aziz] The conference agenda included a large number of political, cultural, economic, administrative, and other issues that are usually on the agenda of the organization's ministerial conferences. Among the most important topics was the Palestine question and steps the organization should take in the near future to support this just cause. The continuing negotiations, between Iraq and Iran, particularly on prisoners of war, also occupied an important position. On the night the conferencee was concluded, a very lengthy debate took place. We, along with other delegations at the (?conference) participated in this debate. We (?explained to) the conferees Iran's stand, which conflicts with [words indistinct] the bases of international law [words indistinct] on looking after the prisoners. We [words indistinct] on this issue, which was understood by the conferees.

The final statement of the conference stated clearly the need for a speedy release of prisoners and [word indistinct] the sixth Geneva convention as well as the text of UN Resolution 598. In general, this conference was one of the [words indistinct] conferences, which passed resolutions demanded by current developments, whether in the Islamic world or in international affairs.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Defense Minister Confers With Soviet Ambassador

JN1903153989 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Staff General 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces and defense minister, received Soviet Ambassador in Baghdad Viktor Minin today. They discussed bilateral relations and ways to promote ties of fruitful cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Polish Prime Minister Arrives on Visit 17 Mar

JN1703172589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1645 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, arrived in Baghdad today leading a delegation on an official 4-day visit to Iraq. [passage omitted]

Ba'th Party, Bangladesh Freedom Party Hold Talks

JN1803201189 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Interparty talks between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the fighters of the Bangladesh Freedom Party began at the Regional Command's headquarters this evening. The Ba'th Party delagation was headed by Regional Command Member Comrade Hasan 'Ali and the Bangladesh Freedom Party fighters side was headed by its Central Council Secretary General (Anwarul Haq).

Beginning of the talks, Comrade Hasan 'Ali reviewed the Ba'th Party's struggle and the achievements of the glorious 17 July revolution in all areas and the positive results of the economic and administrative revolution led by President leader Saddam Husayn. He also cited President leader Saddam's generous initiatives and his announcement of Iraq's complete readiness to carry out a comprehensive exchange of the POW's regardless of the possible results of the talks between Iraq and Iran.

(Anwarul Haq) praised the Ba'th Party's struggle and President leader Saddam Husayn's wise leadership and the victory he has achieved for the Iraqis. He also reiterated his country's support for Iraq if it is exposed to any aggression against its sovereignty and the honor of its sons, referring to the close relations between his country and Iraq.

Air Force Attacks 'Terrorist' Targets in Al-Biqa'

TA2003114189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1132 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Here is a report just in: The Israeli Air Force attacked terrorist targets in the Al-Biqa' region in Lebanon at noon today. All our planes returned safely, and the targets were hit. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the attacked targets were used as bases by terrorists of Ahmad Jibril's organization. The targets are located northeast of Zahlah.

Soldier Killed by 'Terror Squad' on Jordan Border

TA1803100689 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0950 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Following is an Israel Defense Forces [IDF] spokesman's announcement: An IDF reserve soldier, Staff Sergeant Oren Li'or, was killed and another soldier was wounded when an IDF patrol was attacked by a terror squad south of Hazeva in the 'Arava yesterday. Last night at about 2000, fire was opened in the direction of an IDF patrol in the area of Hazeva. The patrol returned the fire. Reservist Oren Li'or was killed and another soldier was wounded. The patrol began searches, and the tracks of two people were identified on the Jordanian border. The wounded soldier is being treated in Soroka Hospital in Beersheba.

Peres on Ambush, Jordan Role

TA1803193189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says that Jordan has taken care to maintain a quiet border in the past, and it is to be assumed that it will continue to do so in the future, too. He emphasized that Israel expects Jordan to penalize those involved in this terrorist act. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that Minister Peres sent his condolences to the family of Oren Li'or, the soldier from Kefar Sava who died in the encounter with the terrorists, as well as wishes for a speedy recovery to the tracker who was wounded in the incident.

It was reported from the Soroka Hospital that the condition of the wounded person is stable. He was operated on at night, and he is hospitalized at the orthopedic ward of the hospital.

Further Details on Ambush

TA1803191989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Jordan has arrested the terrorists who infiltrated last night over the 'Arava border into Israel. In the ambush attack an Israeli soldier, Staff Sergeant Oren Li'or, was killed. A Bedouin tracker was wounded. Israeli troops returned the fire, but the terrorists escaped back across the border. More from reporter Alan Ben-'Ami.

[Begin recording] The attack was at 2045 last night. A squad of reserve army soldiers were on a routine patrol along a stretch of the border with Jordan where no one can recall there had ever been trouble before. [passage omitted]

The attack had been a well-planned ambush. The two men had lifted apart the simple wire strands of the fence to get through, took up positions behind shrub trees about 50 meters apart on the Israeli side, and waited for the patrol to turn up. When the patrol vehicle stopped beside the signs of their entry, they opened up a hail of fire from their Kalashnikov automatic rifles, with the man stationed in front of the patrol vehicle shooting first to draw the soldiers' attention in his direction. The darkness of the night and the clear element of surprise then helped them in their escape. Israel army units began appearing in the area; planes and helicopters flew overhead, dropping flares. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] group based in Damascus has claimed responsibility for the attack. Abu Musa is a breakaway Fatah faction that opposes Yasir 'Arafat. [passage omitted]

Rabin: Jordan 'Responsible'

TA1803114989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Our reporter Alan Ben-'Ami interviewed Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin who told him that Israel holds the Jordanian Government responsible for preventing attacks against Israel from its territory:

[Begin recording] [Rabin] The line between Israel and Jordan is relatively quiet. Tranquility has prevailed along the line here in the 'Arava between the Dead and the Red Seas, and it's quite a unique phenomena that such an incursion with the purpose to carry out murderous terror activities takes place. The soldiers reacted effectively, they were ambushed and I believe that they behaved [sentence as heard]. We see the Government of Jordan responsible first to follow what happened and to catch those who took part and carried out this atrocity. Second, we look at the Government of Jordan as a government which is responsible to prevent any use of its sovereign soil for preparation and carrying out any terror activity against Israel. We demand that the Jordanian Government will make sure that it is in control of its own territory to prevent these kind of activities.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Rabin, there was an incident on the Egyptian border earlier this week; now one last night on the Jordanian border. Do you see these as isolated incidents, or perhaps the start of stepped up activity along the borders here, in addition to the activity in the north?

[Rabin] I hope it's relatively exception, exception activities. At least we demand that it will be no repetition either on the Egyptian side or on the Jordanian side. The governments of Jordan and Egypt must do whatever it is needed to prevent it.

[Ben-'Ami] Both these attacks this week were against military targets. Do you view them as guerrilla raids or as terrorist acts?

[Rabin] I look at them as a terror activity, terror attacks, because they were carried out by terror groups with the purpose to spread terrorism. [end recording]

'Terrorist' Discusses 15 Mar Attack on IDF Camp

TA1703173489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] One of the two terrorists who tried to attack an Israel Defense Forces [IDF] camp near Rafah this week says he was recruited by two men about 2 months ago. They identified themselves as Islamic Jihad members, but just before the operation they told him he would be acting on Fatah's behalf. According to the terrorist, he had no choice but to agree, for fear he would be shot. The man, 'Inan Muhammad Hasan Yunus, 18, told journalists he is an orphan, a member of a large family, and that he was motivated to act out of a desire to get money for his family. According to him, he and his friend trained in an orchard near the Canada camp for 15 minutes only, and crossed the border with the help of a Bedouin. He added that the men who recruited him promised that the entire operation would last a few minutes only. They instructed him and his friend to throw a hand grenade into the camp in order to kill 50 soldiers, and then to shoot an additional 50.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe notes that the terrorist said he received good treatment for his wounds by the IDF.

Arens Discusses Visit to U.S. With Shamir

TA2003163889 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Arens told Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today that the Americans expect him to bring new political ideas when he visits Washington. Arens briefed the prime minister on his recent trip to the United States. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports:

[Begin Gutman recording] Foreign Minister Arens today briefed the prime minister on the results of his trip to the United States. In summing up his 10-day visit, Arens could point to only two issues on which the United States and Israel agree. The first is the new administration's opposition to an international conference; the second is U.S. readiness to invest in efforts toward finding Palestinian interlocutors from the territories who are not affiliated with the PLO. But that is where agreement ends. The main bone of contention was and remains the U.S. stance stipulating that Israel should start negotiations with the PLO in a bid to achieve a peace settlement in the Middle East.

In their meeting today the foreign minister made it clear to Shamir that Washington expects to receive new Israeli proposals during Shamir's upcoming visit. The United States does not expect to receive a full-fledged plan that could cast an embarrassing light on U.S.-Israeli relations, but it does anticipate new ideas, mainly measures designed to tone down the intifadah [uprising] and ease the burden placed on residents of the territories. Yitzhaq Shamir can agree to steps such as opening schools and releasing a certain number of detainees. In the few weeks remaining before Shamir's trip, the Prime Minister's Bureau will work hard to find a magic formula that will appease the Bush administration and at the same time not compromise the two cast-iron principles: no to negotiations with the PLO, and no to a Palestinian state. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Arens: Baker Sought To 'Signal' PLO To Sever Ties

TA1903100189 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 19 Mar 89p 1

[Report from Jerusalem by the political correspondent]

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens has informed Jerusalem of the discussion he held with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker following Baker's remarks before a Senate committee that eventually Israel would have to negotiate with the PLO.

According to Arens' report, Baker said that he had not planned on making the above-mentioned remarks, but that he had been obligated to answer a question. Arens added that Baker stated that he had no intention of implying that the second alternative (the PLO) is the preferred option.

Arens told Baker that his remarks before the Senate committee contradict the spirit of the talks held between Arens and President Bush. In these talks, the President spoke of the necessity to encourage a Palestinian representation that could work in conjunction with Jordan toward a settlement that would not be based on a Palestinian state.

Baker said that by his remarks he wanted to signal to 'Arafat that the United States might encourage negotiations between Israel and the PLO if 'Arafat were to sever all connections with the extremists in his organization. Mr Arens told Baker that his statements in support of negotiations with the PLO lessen the hope of finding Palestinian elements from outside the PLO. Arens explained that no Palestinian would agree to engage in negotiations, out of fear for his life, if negotiations with the PLO were unavoidable eventually.

Peres Peace Plan Calls for 'Palestinian Entity'

TA1903122389 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 19 Mar 89 pp 1, 13

[Report by Tzadoq Yehezqeli, Orli Azulay-Katz, and Roni Shaqed]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Shim'on Peres and Yitzhaq Rabin will demand that while Shamir is in the United States, he not present views unless they are acceptable to the entire Cabinet and he refrain from rejecting U.S. proposals which are acceptable to only half the Cabinet. Peres hopes that the "initiative forum" (Shamir, Arens, Peres, and Rabin) will meet this week. According to protocol, however, if that forum does not convene, Peres is entitled to request an Inner Cabinet meeting on the issue.

It has been learned that Peres will insist that Shamir not say that Israel opposes negotiations with the PLO under any conditions. He will also demand that Shamir not reject the formula of "land in return for peace."

Peres has decided not to publish his political plan. He will reveal it in full only after Shamir's return. The final touches are currently being applied to it, but it may yet undergo some changes. From initial details that have been learned, however, the following can be provided regarding its essence:

1. The plan is suited to the new situation that has evolved, in which Jordan no longer plays a central role in the process;

2. Peres does not say whether or not Israel should talk to the PLO. He believes that the interlocutors should be Palestinians as they are. The plan does not object to the PLO joining the negotiations after Israeli-Palestinian talks have begun and fulfilled certain criteria;

3. Peres' plan is based on an accelerated timetable for implementation. It talks about holding elections in the territories;

4. Peres also offers substance, not merely procedure, to open the negotiations. As a permanent solution, he suggests establishing a "Palestinian entity." This entity will be run by a parliamentary body, or perhaps two parliamentary bodies, which will be elected by the inhabitants of the territories. The area will be demilitarized, while internal security matters will be taken care of by Palestinian police forces.

5. The Palestinian entity will remain demilitarized. Jordan will be able to join the process at any stage.

The plan, as stated above, will be published in full only upon Shamir's return. Peres intends, however, to disclose parts of it tomorrow in his address before the solidarity meeting of world Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

Minister Rabin, who knows about Peres' plan, has rejected it.

Meanwhile there is growing confusion in the top Alignment leadership regarding the political developments. The ministers differ over whether or not the PLO should be included in the negotiations.

It should be pointed out that most of the Alignment ministers claim that if Shamir remains stubborn and no political progress is made, it will be necessary to secede from the Cabinet. The intention, however, is to wait for the outcome of the prime minister's visit to the United States. [passage omitted]

Peres Hints Labor Might Pull Out of Government

TA2003122589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir told diaspora Jewish leaders today that he will present new ideas to advance the peace process in the Middle East when he meets with U.S. President Bush next month. The prime minister, who was speaking to a closed session of the Prime Minister's Solidarity Conference in Jerusalem, did not elaborate. Jack Katzenell reports:

The prime minister did tell the diaspora Jewish leaders what he would not propose to the United States. He said there would be no negotiations with the PLO, and the government is united in its opposition to a Palestinian state. He said PLO attempts to infiltrate the northern border were increasing frequently in spite of Yasir 'Arafat's protestations that he had renounced terrorism.

The prime minister charged that some of the European countries which are urging Israel to make concessions on the Palestinian issue are arming the Arab countries with the most sophisticated weapons, threatening the qualitative edge which has traditionally enabled the Israeli Defense Forces to offset the quantitative superiority of the Arab armed forces.

Vice Premier Shim'on Peres did not echo the call of his deputy minister, Yosi Beilin, for negotiations with the PLO, but he did hint that political changes are to be expected and Labor might have to pull out of the Shamir government in the next few months, or before the year is out.

[Begin Peres recording] I think that in the coming months we shall have to make up our minds. If we can find a joint solution, fine. If not, we shall have to make a historic choice. We will have to make it in a fair way, in a united way, in a civilized way. Your coming here is a mobilization of the maximum that the free people, that the Jewish people are, can do. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1105 GMT on 20 March adds Peres, in English, referring to the peace process on the same occasion: "We will have to make tough decisions, costly decisions, impossible decisions. But I think that we have to make them now, not to postpone them, not to think that we are engaged in a matter of public relations. It is not public relations, it is Jewish destiny. I do not suggest that we make any concessions to terror or violence. But I do suggest that we make concessions for peace and a different future."]

Labor 'Red Lines' for Staying in Government Noted

TA2003130589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Hayim Ramon, chairman of the Alignment Knesset faction, says that the top leadership of his party accepts the idea of quitting the government if no progress is evident in the direction of peace. Our Knesset correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that Knesset Member

Ramon said in a news conference that as far as the Labor Party is concerned, one of the red lines would be the prime minister's rejection of a U.S. offer to mediate between Israel and the PLO on three issues: a cease-fire in Lebanon, reducing violence in the territories, and holding elections there. In Ramon's opinion, the U.S. secretary of state's remarks that Israel will ultimately have to negotiate with the PLO resulted from Foreign Minister Arens' rejection of such a U.S. proposal.

Mubarak Asks Reporters To Relay Message to Shamir

TA1903132889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] At the end of the ceremony in which Egyptian sovereignty was effected in Tabah, President Husni Mubarak told Israeli journalists that the entire Arab world, including the PLO, wants peace with Israel. The international conference could be used as a psychological umbrella, as he phrased it, under whose patronage direct negotiations would be held.

Mubarak said: It is imperative to solve the problem of the Palestinians, who have no land; there is nothing to fear about it. He asked the Israeli correspondents to relay to Yitzhaq Shamir a message saying that peace is precious and merits any sacrifice. Drop the cliches, Mubarak said, since they will only lead to destruction and death, and we will all lose.

Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that President Mubarak hoisted the Egyptian flag in Tabah at around 1400. The ceremony was attended by the entire Egyptian top leadership, which arrived especially for the occasion. At the end of the ceremony and the casual talk with the Israeli correspondents, Mubarak left the area and returned to Cairo.

Arens Hears UN Head's 'Protest' on Lebanon

TA1803060189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Arens had a brief meeting in New York yesterday with UN Secretary General Perez De Cuellar in which they discussed the recent incidents in south Lebanon between Israeli soldiers and Norwegian UN troops. Asked whether the secretary general protested to Arens or merely discussed the matter with him, a UN spokesman said it was discussion in the form of protest. The spokesman also said they talked about the situation in the West Bank and Gaza and the peace process. Asked why the meeting was so short, the UN spokesman said they exhausted what they had to say in 25 minutes.

Court Orders Rabin To Defend Plastic Bullet Use

TA2003095789 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 Mar 89 p 1

[ITIM report]

[Text] The High Court of Justic yesterday ordered Defence Minister Rabin to explain within 45 days why he should not revoke the standing orders on the firing of plastic bullets.

The order nisi was requested by the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights.

Attorney Felicia Langer argued, on behalf of the organization, that the use of plastic bullets violates Israeli and international law.

State Attorney Nili 'Arad claimed the issue is not subject to the jurisdiction of the courts since it deals with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operations. The open-fire orders are legal and are largely motivated by the desire to save human life and not to have to use live ammunition, she argued.

Court Orders Re-Examination of Detainee's Death

TA1703195189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] High Court Justice Aharon Baraq today issued an order nisi to the defense and police ministers. They are requested to answer, within 20 days, a petition by members of the family of Mahmud al-Masri, a Khan Yunus detainee who died in Gaza prison 2 weeks ago. The family has petitioned the court to reexamine the body and to appoint an independent inquiry. An earlier investigation by the police commissioner found that the prisoner died of a ruptured ulcer.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

3 Killed, 17 Wounded in Gaza

TA1803142389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Three inhabitants were killed in a serious riot in Gaza at noon, and according to locals' testimony, 17 were wounded. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that senior Israel Defense Forces officers arrived at the site and began debriefings. This was the most serious incident that has happened in Gaza lately.

The clashes with the border policemen took place near one of the mosques of the Al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza. A curfew was imposed on the area following the incident, but it was lifted in the afternoon.

6 Hurt in West Bank

TA1803202489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Two Molotov cocktails were thrown at the car of Ma'ale Efrayim residents near Mevo Shilo this evening. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the bottles missed the car and no one was hurt.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that there were several stone-throwing incidents in Judaea and Samaria today. Judaea and Samaria residents say that six people were wounded by rubber bullets in clashes with soldiers.

Update on Weekend Incidents

TA1903083689 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Mar 89 p 1

[Report by Mikhal Sela']

[Excerpts] Troops shot and killed three Palestinians in Gaza yesterday and wounded at least 37. [passage omitted]

In other clashes in the Gaza Strip, 11 persons were shot and wounded: four in Gaza, four in Rafah, two in the refugee camp, and one in the Al-Shati' refugee camp, and one in the Al-Nusayrat camp.

Meanwhile, the curfew on Khan Yunus remained in force for the fourth day as troops continued house-to-house searches.

On Friday, Muhammad Ghazi Dola, 22, of the Zaytun neighbourhood in Gaza, was found dead at the Qezi'ot detention camp. An intensive investigation by the police and military police led to a detainee who is suspected of killing Dola. An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman said the murder was criminally motivated, though Palestinians in Gaza said Dola may have been killed because his colleagues suspected he was cooperating with the Israeli authorities. In the West Bank, Palestinians reported 11 people wounded by rubber bullets: Three in the old city of Nabulus, two in the neighbouring Balatah refugee camp, which was put under curfew, and one at Iraq Burin, near Nabulus. In Qabatiyah, near Janin, a 22-year-old man was wounded. Four Palestinians were wounded in the Ayda refugee camp in Bethlehem.

Janin police are investigating the death of Burhan al-Atrash, 19, from Kafr Dan, who was found dead on Friday night. Al-Atrash's family told reporters that he had suffered a heart attack, though some villagers said he was killed because he was suspected of cooperating with the Israeli authorities. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 19 March in a report by Mikhal Qedem, Oren Kohen, and Shim'on Elqabetz on page 7 adds that according to Arab sources "200 residents were injured by rubber bullets, blows from clubs, and tear gas in the course of severe riots that took place in the Gaza Strip yesterday."

Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0500 GMT on 19 March reports that "In the territories, a new communique has been released by the leaders of the uprising. Leaflet No 36 signals a departure from previous communiques in that it does not clearly demand the Palestinian right to return to Israel within the 1967 borders."

Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 19 March reports that "the security forces imposed a curfew on the Jabalyah refugee camp this morning."]

3 Border Policemen Stabbed

TA1903085789 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Three border policemen were wounded in Gaza this morning. One of them was slightly wounded while the other two suffered moderate wounds. They were stabbed by an Arab assailant in Gaza. The incident took place some 90 minutes ago. The policemen were chasing a suspect when he suddenly attacked them with a knife. As was said before, three policemen were wounded. They were taken for treatment at Barzilay hospital in Ashqelon.

The assailant was shot and killed on the spot. His body was taken to the 'Amdana'i hospital and was later snatched. The assailant was Talal Salim 'Arraj from the Daraj neighborhood in Gaza. The site of the incident, the Tuffah neighborhood, was placed under curfew.

Commander Defends Procedure

TA1903192089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The commander of the Border Police in Gaza, Yisra'el Asaf, says his soldiers acted according to standard procedure, and were quick to react in this morning's incident in Gaza City's Tuffah neighborhood, when three border policemen were stabbed by a Palestinian. The assailant was fired at and killed on the spot. Two of the three border policemen are in moderate condition, while the third sustained light wounds. The Border Police commander said the only problem was that when the first border policeman was stabbed he did not realize it, and therefore the unit did not immediately pursue the assailant. He added that had they done so, there probably would have been less casualties to the Border Police unit. The Border Police commander also said that up to now disturbances have not been a cause for opening fire, but this may have to be changed in the light of today's incident in Gaza.

1 Injured by Nabulus Firebomb

TA1903102289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] This morning the planning offices of the Civil Administration in Nabulus were set on fire. One local employee was treated for smoke inhalation. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that unidentified assailants threw firebombs into the offices, causing very slight damage.

Firebomb Thrower Sentenced

TA1903134989 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 19 Mar 89 p A12

[Report by Barukh Me'iri]

[Excerpt] A 14-year-old boy from Jerusalem's Al-Tur neighborhood who threw a firebomb at a Border Police vehicle was sentenced last week by the Jerusalem District

Court to 15 months in prison and given a 1-year suspended sentence. A friend who helped him plan the attack was sentenced to 10 months in jail. The boy argued in court that he had not at all intended to hurt Border Police personnel. [passage omitted]

Confinement Orders Issued

TA1903135189 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 19 Mar 89 p 4

[ITIM report]

[Text] On Friday the security forces issued a 6-month confinement order against Nahida Nazzal from Qalqilyah, a member of the Arab Journalists Association executive. The order restricts her movements outside the town of Qalqilyah for 6 months and obliges her to report to the local police station every day.

Nazzal used to be a correspondent for the East Jerusalem AL-'AWDAH weekly. Security sources said that the confinement order was issued "in view of her subversive activities."

A confinement order was issued a few days ago against Hamdan Hamdan from Bethlehem, who has in the past been held in administrative detention for 4 months. Hamdan is a clerk in East Jerusalem's Al-Maqasid Hospital.

2 Killed, 1 Wounded Near Janin

TA1903173189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Two Arab youngsters were killed and a third one was wounded in Silat al-Harithiyah in the Janin District this afternoon. Local villagers told our correspondent Arye Gus that demonstrations erupted in the village at noon. Israeli army soldiers used their weapons, causing the death of two boys aged 12 and 14 and the wounding of another, who was taken to a hospital in Nabulus.

Military sources confirm that soldiers indeed opened fire in the course of an incident in the village of Silat al-Harithiyah. The sources added that senior Israeli army officers are on the scene to investigate the events and examine the reports on casualties.

Gaza Youth Killed 19 Mar

TA1903182189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] A 15-year-old youth who threw a bottle at an Israel Defense Forces patrol was shot and killed in Gaza this evening. One of the soldiers in the patrol fired at the youth because he thought the bottle was a Molotov cocktail. The youth was killed on the spot, and his body was snatched from the hospital.

Military sources noted that the soldier acted according to orders. A check at the site discovered a Molotov cocktail ready for use.

8 Wounded in Gaza Strip

TA1903193489 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] There were violent demonstrations and several disturbances in the Gaza Strip today, in the course of which a 15-year-old youth was shot and killed, and eight Arabs were wounded by the firing of plastic bullets. The youth was shot as it was suspected that he was going to throw a Molotov cocktail.

A curfew is in force now on the Khan Yunus, Dayr al-Balah, Al-Shaykh Radwan, Al-Shati', Jabalyah, Al-Mughazi, Al-Nusayrat, and Al-Burayj refugee camps, as well as on the Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza. A partial commercial and school strike was staged today, while laborers left for work in Israel as usual.

IDF Officer 'Slightly' Wounded

TA1903204289 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] An Israel Defense Forces officer was slightly injured in Gaza this evening by stones thrown by rioters. The officer, First Lieutenant Gay Linn, 26, was injured on his forehead and transferred to the Barzilay Hospital in Ashqelon for treatment. It was reported from the hospital that his injury is slight.

Much of Gaza Under Curfew

TA2003091489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Following the incidents occurring over the last few days, all the Gaza Strip refugee camps have been placed under curfew with the aim of preventing disturbances. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that a curfew was also clamped on three neighborhoods of Gaza and several in Rafah. There is a commercial strike in the Gaza Strip to protest the large number of casualties during the recent disturbances.

In the village of Silat al-Harithiyah in Samaria, the IDF is continuing to investigate the circumstances surrounding yesterday's incident in which, according to local residents, two youths were killed and one was wounded. The village is under curfew.

No Casualties in Firebombing

TA2003095089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Three firebombs were hurled this morning at an Israeli vehicle at the entrance to the village of Zawiyah in the Gaza Strip, but there were no casualties or damage. Our correspondent Arye Gus points out that Qatif bloc settlers yesterday damaged greenhouses and agricultural products belonging to Zawiyah residents to protest the burning down of the Qatif bloc packinghouse the night before.

Infiltration Operation Into Israel Reported

Amman Investigating Event

JN1803122489 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] According to a responsible Jordanian source, Amman is investigating Israeli media reports about an infiltration operation across the Jordanian-Israeli border—although Jordan does not necessarily have to comment on everything written in the Israeli media. The source told our radio station that Amman is committed to the armistice treaty and does not allow armed individuals to infiltrate or cross the armistice border.

He added that the Jordanian-Israeli border is the longest between any Arab country and Israel. He also stated that it is not surprising that the border is infiltrated sometimes .

Two 'Infiltrators' Arrested

JN1803174389 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Randa Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Excerpt] A Jordanian official source states that at 0700, two infiltrators, who crossed the Jordanian territories from the west, were arrested at Wadi al-'Arabah to the south of Amman. They are being interrogated by the authorities.

The statement was broadcast by the official news agency, PETRA, and came after Israeli authorities announced that commandos had infiltrated through Jordanian territory into Israel last night. [passage omitted]

Abu Musa Group Claims Operation

JN1803193189 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] group, a dissident faction of the PLO, claimed responsibility today for the infiltration operation into the village of Hazeva in the Negev, southern Israel, which was carried out by two armed Palestinians across the Jordanian border last night. This is according to a REUTERS dispatch from Damascus citing the group's military spokesman.

During the operation, the two armed Palestinians fired at an Israeli patrol, killing one soldier and wounding another, and escaped.

Second Group Makes Claim

JN1903182589 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] In Beirut today the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF] claimed responsibility for the fedayeen group's infiltration into Israel across the Jordanian border. It revealed the names of the two PLF members who were arrested by the Jordanian authorities after the operation. They were arrested in their homes in Jordan. They are Muhammad Zurayat and Husayn Buqayq.

It should be noted that Fatah-Provisional Command, led by Abu Musa, claimed responsibility for the operation yesterday.

Husayn, Al-Rifa'i Return From Europe 19 Mar

JN1903190189 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur returned to the country this evening from London. [passage omitted]

They were received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, a number of Hashemite family members, senior military and civilian officials, the British ambassador and the Netherlands charge d'affaires in Amman. Returning with his majesty were Zayd al-Rifa'i, prime minister; and Field Marshal Zayd ibn Shakir, chief of the Royal Court.

Israeli Aircraft Bomb Palestinian Positions

NC2003113089 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1126 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] A Voice of Lebanon correspondent has learned that the Israeli raids on the Barr Ilyas area in Al-Biqa' were targeted against positions belonging to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine near the 'Aziz Wardah farms, and others near Kafr Zabad.

Six Israeli warplanes were involved in the raid.

Fadlallah on U.S. Officers Wounded in Shelling

NC1703183789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] During Friday prayers today, Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said the massacre which was committed in West Beirut was similar to that carried out in the suburb.

He said: You say the shelling came from the mountain area or positions held by the Syrian forces. If you want to propagate lies, do not make them such big ones. The matter, he added, is not a question of action and reaction. It is more serious.

Fadlallah asserted that American officers were wounded during the bombardment of Al-Yarzah [Defense Ministry]. He also stated that the Army has been furnished with sophisticated equipment, which is being handled by U.S. officers.

Fadlallah expressed belief that the new U.S. Administration's policy is different from that of the former one, and that it is more dangerous for Lebanon because the new administration is committed to protecting Israel's security.

Abu-Dhabi Paper Comments

JN1803144889 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I in Arabic 16 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that two U.S. military experts were wounded in the shelling of the Lebanese Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah, southeast Beirut, the day before yesterday.

Military sources in Beirut have revealed to AL-ITTIHAD that the two experts were among a group of seven U.S. experts supervising the training of artillery units in the Lebanese Army, which have recently been furnished with modern electronic equipment that can pinpoint the location of the counter-shelling positions.

The sources added that U.S. ambassador John McCarthy's visit to the Defense Ministry building some 30 minutes after the shelling was to reassure himself about the safety of the other experts and to supervise the evacuation of the two wounded experts to Cyprus aboard a U.S. helicopter.

UK Foreign Office 'Played Down' Bomb Threat

LD1703210689 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1737 GMT 17 Mar 89

["Beirut Bomb: Embassy Link Played Down," by Michael Prescott, PRESS ASSOCIATION lobby correspondent]

[Text] The Foreign Office tonight played down suggestions that the British Embassy could have been the intended target for the massive Beirut car bomb that killed at least 12 people and injured more than 150.

"We have no evidence to suggest that is the case," said a spokesman, adding that there were no reports of Britons being among the dead and injured.

The Voice of Lebanon radio station of the right-wing Christian Phalange Party had suggested the 110 lb bomb could have been meant for the embassy—it went off just 50 yards from the embassy's consular office.

The radio claimed the embassy had received threats over Salman Rushdie's novel, "The Satanic Verses."

Shelling Reported in Beirut, Mountain Area

NC1803073789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Yesterday's criminal car bombing in Jall al-Dhi'b has left 13 persons dead and over 100 wounded, according to the final count of casualties.

This morning, socialist gunmen in the mountain directed machinegun fire at Army positions in the nearby hills.

Residential areas in 'Ayn al-Rummanah are coming under shelling from the southern suburb.

Last night, there were violent clashes in the mountain, Beirut, and suburb combat lines. Medium-caliber weapons, rockets, and mortars were used in the fighting which took place in Suq al-Gharb, 'Aytat, Al-Khazzanat, and Hill 888 in the mountain, as well as the old commercial markets, 'Ayn al-Rummanah, and Al-Shiyah in Beirut. Three persons were wounded in shelling in 'Ayn al-Rummanah.

VOL Reports Two Shells Fall on Beirut Port

NC1803082589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Two shells fell on [Beirut] port at approximately 0715 today.

'Intermittent' Clashes Continue in Beirut

NC1803092989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] According to the latest security reports, the combat lines in the commercial markets area [in Beirut] have been the scene of intermittent clashes involving machineguns since 1030 this morning.

Fire Exchanged at Combat Lines; Clashes Extend

NC1803093589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The security situation on the Dahr al-Wahsh combat lines has suffered a setback where gunfire has been exchanged. Some shells were fired on the eastern area. Three shells fell on Al-Marn plain and two shells on Sadd al-Bawshariyah. This was preceded by an attack on Beirut port.

Later on, the area of the clashes expanded to include the area of Suq al-Gharb.

Army Positions 'Under Bombardment'; Port Shelled

NC1803101389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Lebanese Army positions in Suq al-Gharb and Dahr al-Wahsh are coming under mortar and tank bombardment. Meanwhile, the Progressive Socialist Party's gunmen are reinforcing their positions.

The area of [Beirut] port was also under shelling, the latest being the falling of four shells at 1030 today.

Intensive sniper fire has been taking place on the combat lines in the capital since this morning.

4 Wounded in Shelling; Beirut Port Shelled

NC1803131789 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Following last night's shelling of 'Ayn al-Rummanah, in which four persons were wounded, five shells fell on Beirut port in two volleys this morning, damaging wheat silos and customs offices. The main road [not further identified] was also hit by shells.

Junblatt's gunmen escalated the security situation in the mountain this morning. Clashes took place on the Shimlan, Suq al-Gharb, and 'Aytat combat lines. Shells fell on Dahr al-Wahsh, Al-Kahhalah hills, 'Arayya, and the areas around Kafr Shima and B'abda.

Explosions were heard in Sadd al-Bawshariyah. The cause of the explosion was the blowing up of poles in the Al-'Usayli factory.

As for the crossing points, the Monte Verde-Ra's al-Matn and B'abdat-Salima roads are still closed. The Al-Duwar-Duhur Al-Shuwayr-museum-Al-Barbah road is open.

Air Force Flies Over Coast, Draws Ground Fire

NC1703174089 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Lebanese Air Force planes flew over Beirut and the coastal area shortly before 1800 today as part of their surveillance duties over the coasts. According to socialist [Progressive Socialist Party] sources, antiaircraft fire was directed at the planes in the coastal Al-Shuf area. Meanwhile, semi-normal activity was reported at Beirut port. The naval operations room continued its task of monitoring shipping in Lebanese territorial waters.

Lebanese Forces Deploy 90 Tanks in Eastern Area

NC1803082989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] According to people arriving from the eastern area, the Lebanese Forces have deployed 90 tanks in the eastern areas of Beirut. Groups of 30 tanks each have been deployed in Al-Ashrafiyah, al-Judaydah-Dubayyah, and Jubayl areas.

Syrian Envoy Brings Instructions, Proposals

NC1703182389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] At a time when the military truce is still unstable, Syrian Brigadier General Muhammad Sa'id arrived in West Beirut today as an envoy of the Syrian authorities. He will hold consultations in connection with the current situation.

Political sources have told the CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY that Brig Gen Sa'id is bringing istructions from Damascus to its allies in Beirut. These instructions can be summarized as follows: Any military and security escalation must be avoided; General 'Awn's government must not be allowed to impose its authority on the western areas; Gen 'Awn's decisions on the ports and the naval operations room must be rejected. The measures connected with the naval operations room should be abolished and ships arriving in Lebanon should dock at Beirut, Tripoli, or Sidon ports where they will pay customs duties and go through the necessary legal procedures. After that, the ships can leave for any port to unload their cargoes. This procedure will be followed until the issue is resolved as part of a general political accord amaong the Lebanese.

Syrians Discuss Port Issue

NC1803124989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The newspaper AL-DIYAR today says that the Syrian military delegation which arrived yesterday in West Beirut has failed to tackle the issue of the ports. The delegation suggested a compromise solution according to which ships may dock in Al-Jiyah and Al-Awza'i harbors while customs should be collected in Sidon port, but this idea was rejected.

The delegation, led by Brigadier General Muhammad Sa'id, left for Damascus with a pessimistic impression. AL-DIYAR cites a delegation member as saying that escalation is quite likely in view of General 'Awn's stands. 'Awn's call for liberation will lead to an increase in the number of Syrian troops in Lebanon from 50,000 to 100,000, the same Syrian official said, according to AL-DIYAR.

Pro-Syrian Groups To Coordinate 'Striking Force'

NC1803122989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] It has been learned that the National Operations Room, a body which pro-Syrian groups and parties formed in West Beirut 2 days ago, met yesterday in Henri Shihab barracks and decided to form a striking force to coordinate artillery fire and military moves on the combat lines.

Syrian Forces Fortify Positions in W. Beirut

NC1803162589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Citing security sources in West Beirut, the Bayrut News Agency has reported that the Syrian occupation forces evacuated all of their positions in the Spinnays and the Sports City areas at dawn today. These forces moved with their vehicles to the 'Aramun area, where they deployed in the area extending from the Khaldah triangle to the 'Aramun hills. The same sources have disclosed that this Syrian measure aims to allow Brigadier General Sami al-Khatib's brigades to deal with any situation that may develop in the western area, while, if asked, the Syrian forces will provide only military support in order to depict the confrontation as inter-Lebanese, or between two Lebanese armies. The sources also reported that the Syrian occupation forces stationed opposite the military beach have received instructions to fortify their positions and to set up earthern ramparts around their vehicles and artillery emplacements.

Meanwhile, the AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM News Agency reports that the Syrian occupation forces are continuing to build fortifications and ramparts in the southern suburb and that they have installed rocket launchers on rooftops in Al-Ghubayrah and on Al-Abyad Street in Al-Ruways. The agency added that the Syrian forces have also emptied building shelters in Harat Hurayk and turned them into ammunition depots.

RFL Reports Syrian Shelling, Sniper Fire

NC1803180189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] It is apparent that the escalatory trend still governs the Syrian stand. Syria appears to be eager to maintain a minimal degree of tension by adopting more than one method. Without any justification, and suddenly as usual, six shells fell on the Kasrawan coast area between 1730 and 1740 today. Security sources believe the source to be West Beirut. There was no report on casualties. DPA has confirmed that the source of the shelling was West Beirut, whose residents were prompted to leave the streets for fear of retaliation while the Syrian forces and their allied militia men remained on the streets.

Observers have noted that this surprise shelling came at a time when some sources spoke of an undeclared accord, stipulating that travel to and from Lebanon would be continued at Beirut airport and the port of Juniyah.

Meanwhile, attacks on the capital axes resumed shortly after 1800 today. Intense sniper fire was reported on the eastern side of the Fu'ad Shihab bridge locality up to the Primo, Al-Barjawi, and port areas.

Army Communique on Continuing Syrian Bombardment

NC1803181689 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1733 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] We have just received a report from the newsdesk. The Army Command's Guidance Directorate issued the following communique a short while ago: For the 4th consecutive day, the artillery of the Syrian occupation forces continues to bombard Beirut and Juniyah ports and directs indiscriminate shelling at some residential areas in the capital and its suburbs. The Lebanese Army remains commtted not to respond to the hostile enemy fire out of concern for the lives of Lebanese citizens and to avoid inflicting damage on their property. The hostile artillery has exploited this stance by the Army and has gone to extreme lengths in its aggression, causing loss of life and property. For this reason, the Army Command calls on our people in the areas adjacent to these artillery emplacements to reject this action in accordance with their ability and in a way that would keep the guns of the foreign will away from them. This foreign will wants to turn them into sandbags and protective barriers in an attempt to arouse the people against their Army.

The Army Command reiterates that it will not be dragged into involvement in the criminal scheme that is designed to make our Army bombard its own people. The Army relies on the morale, steafastness, and spirit of resistance of these people to liberate the land and regain sovereignty.

Hizballah Allegedly Receives PRC Helicopters

NC1803063189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The magazine LE POINT today mentions that members of pro-Iranian Hizballah have recently received four small helicopters from the PRC. The magazine adds that these planes can be fitted with surface-to-air [as heard] missiles. The disassembled parts of these planes are currently stored in the southern suburb, the magazine says.

Al-Asad Returns From N. African Visit 19 Mar

JN1903191289 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad returned to Damascus tonight after visiting the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, Algeria, and Tunisia. During this tour, he held talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, President Chadli Bendjedid, and President Zine El Abidine Ben on regional issues. The talks were held to enhance Arab plans in confronting hostile schemes.

The delegation returning with the president included 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, vice president of the Republic; Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; Daniel Ni'mah and Safwan Qudsi, members of the Central Committee of the National Progressive Front.

TISHRIN Assesses Visit

JN1803125489 Damascus SANA 0900 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 18 Mar (SANA)—In a commentary today, TISHRIN says that the visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyah by President Hafiz al-Asad and his talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi emphasize that Syria, through its militant position and strategic understanding of the foremost and central Arab issue, the Palestine question, will exert all its capacity to defend the Arab land and nation.

Syria, under President al-Asad, the paper adds, realizes that the Arabs have no option but to close ranks and achieve a militant Arab struggle based on the principle of not conceding or selling out Arab rights and on the belief in the legitimacy of Arab struggle to liberate the land, regain their rights, and end the occupation.

The paper adds that Arab unity, with which revolutionary and struggling Arab Syria has always been obsessed, is a basic constituent of the Arab nation's existence and is also the basic option for the Arab nation in the current international circumstances.

Concluding, TISHRIN says that the Al-Asad-Al-Qadhdhafi meeting will definitely consolidate the unified Arab position and strengthen the unity of the common Arab action and solidarity in the interests of our Arab nation and its militant goals of liberation and victory.

Foreign Minister Returns From ICO Conference

JN1703165089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus this afternoon after heading the Syrian delegation to the 18th Islamic Conference Organization foreign ministers meeting, which concluded its proceedings in Riyadh yesterday.

Belgian Foreign Minister Arrives 17 Mar

Arrival Statement Noted

JN1703185789 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans and his delegation arrived in Damascus this evening on a visit to Syria that will last several days.

Tindemans was received at the Damascus international airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. He was also received by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister; the heads of the Foreign Ministry Western Europe and Protocol Departments; and the Belgian ambassador to Damascus and the embassy staff.

Following his arrival, the Belgian foreign minister gave a statement to journalists in which he asserted that Syria has an important position in the Middle East region and the world, pointing out that this visit will cover a number of different issues, particularly the Middle East issue, which is one of the most important issues in international politics.

The Belgian foreign minister added that he will discuss with Syrian officials the relations between the two countries and a number of issues of mutual concern.

Answering a question on the Middle East issue, the Belgian foreign minister said that this issue is very important, and as Syria has an important position in the region, an exchange of opinions with Syrian officials is a very important matter.

Meets With Counterpart

JN1803170889 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans met this morning at the Foreign Ministry. The meeting was attended on the Syrian side by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister and head of the Foreign Ministry's Western Europe Department; and the head of the Economic Department in the ministry. On the Belgian side were Jacques Holange Van Loc, general political director; Albert d'Alpina, head of the Middle East section of the Foreign Ministry's General Political Department; and Belgian Ambassador in Damascus Andre Vocard.

Talks centered on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the importance of a just peace through the international conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Mr Tindemans expressed the EEC position on the peace process in the Middle East in light of the tour by the European Troika to the region.

They also discussed current developments in Lebanon and bilateral relations. The two sides affirmed their desire to develop them in various fields.

Concludes 2-Day Visit

JN1903115289 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0955 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 19 Mar (SANA)—Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans and his delegation left Damascus this morning concluding a 3-day visit to Syria during which he held talks with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Leo Tindemans made a statement prior to departure in which he expressed his satisfaction with the discussions he held in Syria. He said: We exchanged views on the international situation, especially in the Middle East region. He described relations between Syria and Belgium as excellent, indicating the need to improve and develop these relations.

Defense Minister Meets With Polish Counterpart

JN2003074089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, received at his office this evening the Polish National Defense Minister, General Florian Siwicki, and his delegation. The meeting was attended by General 'Ali Aslan and General Hasan Turkmani, deputy chiefs of staff of the Army and the Armed Forces, and the Polish ambassador in Damascus.

The talks centered on relations of friendship and strong cooperation between the two friendly armies and in ways to promote them.

Gen Florian and his delegation arrived at the Damascus international airport at noon today. He was received by Gen Mustafa Talas, Gen Hasan Turkmani, a number of the General Command high-ranking officers, the Polish ambassador and Polish military attache in Damascus, and the embassy staff. [passage omitted]

Paper Criticizes 'Awn's 'Isolationist Clique'

JN1403125489 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0850 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 14 Mar (SANA)—In an editorial today, AL-BA'TH says that the isolationist clique in Lebanon is moving to disrupt Arab efforts to find a solution and is undermining the work of the Arab ministerial committee. This committee has made large and important strides on the road to approximating stands and viewpoints of the various Lebanese forces and figures in preparation for the crystallization of a draft solution to place the Lebanese homeland on the road to salvation.

The paper adds that what this isolationist clique fears the most is that matters proceed toward a solution that will restore Lebanon to all the Lebanese, a Lebanon that will be managed by them and protected by their love and their readiness to offer sacrifices for its sake.

The paper says that the sedition that 'Awn recently ignited amid the preparations for the attainment of the third stage of the Arab ministerial committee's work is actually an overt attempt to obstruct definitively the Arab role in the Lebanese crisis.

AL-BA'TH concludes: In light of all this,'Awn's claim that Syria is obstructing the Arab ministerial committee's work calls for ridicule and disdain at a time when facts show that the isolationist party is hostile not only to the noble Syrian and Arab role but also to Lebanon's unity, Arab affiliation, independence, and future.

Paper Cited on 'Zionized Clique' in Lebanon

JN1903094289 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Mar 89

[From the Press Review]

[Text] In an editorial, TISHRIN comments on the situation in Lebanon, the deterioration of the security situation there by the Zionized clique, and its attempt to propagate falsehoods and poisonous lies against Syria and its fraternal redemptive initiative and says: This clique overlooks facts and seeks to conceal the essence of the crisis, namely the sectarian Lebanese political system which has, more than anything else, caused the eruption of the crisis and has so far prevented a national solution that would consecrate national accord and bring about equality among the sons of the one people.

TISHRIN adds: Syria tried persistently with all parties to bring views closer together and to establish points of common agreement and has actually arrived at the broad outlines of a national solution. However, those enjoying sectarian privileges have hastened to reject this solution, as they do not see any future for themselves other than oppressing, exploiting, and sucking the blood of the masses. To achieve this objective, they deal readily with the enemies of Lebanon and Arabism.

Paper Asserts Need For 'Effective' Arab Position

JN2003090889 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Mar 89

["Press Review"]

[Text] Under the headline "Al-Asad's Syria and the Effective Arab Position" AL-BA'TH editorializes: Leader Al-Asad's talks in Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia concerned, among other things, the need to exert more pan-Arab efforts to establish an effective Arab position against the enemies' schemes, to defend our nation's rights, and to safeguard its future. Arab Syria has never backed down from its stand since leader Al-Asad assumed the pan-Arab responsibility based on his absolute belief in Arab rights, dignity, and shining future sought by our masses—a future of idealism and total liberation from the Zionist occupation, and free from all remnants of backwardness and old and new colonialism.

AL-BA'TH continues: Leader Al-Asad has taught us that our nation's battle is multifaceted and that our conflict against the Zionist enemy is the top priority in this battle. Leader Hafiz al-Asad has described this conflict more than once as a conflict over existence, not borders. That is to say, our nation's existence is threatened and that this threat is directed against the entire Arab homeland—territory and nation.

AL-BA'TH says: In light of this, the leader, who devoted all his thinking and efforts for the sake of the decisive battle, has been working since the dawn of the glorious corrective stage to reach an effective Arab position—the position that produced results that are the pride of our nation, beginning with the October liberation war and ending with removal of the conspiracy against the Arab destiny.

AL-BA'TH concludes: In light of the pioneering foreign policy of Al-Asad's Syria, our belief in our Arabism and destiny requires us to rise above narrow interests and try to conctruct a firm Arab position that can confront the schemes and dangers surrounding our nation. It is the position that guarantees the future of the coming generations and deserves world respect.

Afghanistan

Kabul Publicly Presents 2 Pakistani Prisoners

BK1903114089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1133 GMT 19 Mar 89

[By Kate Webb]

[Text] Kabul, March 19 (AFP)—The Kabul government Sunday publicly presented two prisoners identified as Pakistani non-commissioned officers who infiltrated into Afghanistan to carry out espionage and to train mujahidin rebels. The two men, who identified themselves as Mohammad Afzul, 26, a corporal in the Pakistani Criminal Investigation Division, and Mohammad Ashraf, 25, a sergeant in the Pakistani militia, were presented to the press and foreign diplomats at a Foreign Ministry conference hall.

Officials said the capture of the two men proved Kabul government charges that Pakistan had increased its involvement in Afghanistan since Soviet troops completed their withdrawal on February 15.

The Kabul government has said that up to 3,000 Pakistani militia are taking part in an assault on the eastern city of Jalalabad begun two weeks ago by the mujahidin and alleged that Pakistan had planned, equipped and arranged the offensive. Both men said they had been captured in southern Qandahar Province, one in January and the other on March 13 only a day after entering Afghanistan and not in the vicinity of the Jalalabad battle zone in Nangarhar Province.

Top-level sources in the United Nations Good Offices Mission for Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) who were present at the group interview said they had received a formal complaint based on statements by the two prisoners on Saturday. UNGOMAP personnel would need to interview Mr. Afzul and Mr. Ashraf to establish their identities, the sources said, adding that the mission would be applying to Kabul for appropriate facilities.

Mr. Ashraf, who said he was a native of Pakistan's Sind Province, asserted that he had seen four Saudi Arabian advisers to the mujahidin inside Afghan territory. He said he had also met U.S. advisers to the rebels in Pakistan, where the mujahidin have training bases. Mr. Ashraf, who in reply to questions criticised Pakistan's Afghan policy, said he had been on a mission to train mujahidin units when he was captured on March 13.

Mr. Afzul, who said under questioning that Pakistani Criminal Investigation Division personnel were operating in Afghanistan under instructions of Islamabad's military intelligence, said his mission had been to contact two Afghan officers and persuade them to defect. He said he had also been asked to identify and evaluate military targets. Both men, who spoke in Urdu, Pakistan's official language, said they had seen contingents of Pakistani militia along the two countries' common border.

Mr. Afzul said that he had also seen one Pakistani militia unit in Afghanistan some 12 kilometres (seven miles) from the frontier and that Pakistani artillery had been used to fire at government targets across the border.

Mr. Ashraf, who said he entered Afghanistan on January 15, was the more vocal of the two prisoners and said he had been accompanied by four compatriots, two of whom were hit by mines. He said he was arrested when he decided to return to Pakistan and was picked up by Afghan security personnel because he did not have identity papers.

Both men sat through the more than two-hour interview at a small table laden with press microphones, dressed in the same Afghan civilian clothes they wore at the time they were arrested.

Sources at the Pakistani Embassy here said after the conference that the pair appeared to be Pakistanis, but declined more substantive comment. A government spokesman said the two men would be tried before a special tribunal after ongoing investigations were completed.

Before presenting the two prisoners, a government official said Kabul had evidence that the 11th and 18th Pakistani Army divisions were involved in the battle for Jalalabad and that Pakistani intelligence had provided heavy and light weapons support for the offensive. Calling Pakistani involvement a "new dimension" in the Afghan conflict, the spokesman said it contravened the Geneva convention. Pakistan has denied charges of involvement in the Jalalabad offensive.

'Spies' Hold Press Conference

LD1903152289 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Two Pakisani spies, who were recently captured during their subversive activities in the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, held a press conference this afternoon at the Foreign Ministry's Storey Palace with domestic and foreign journalists, a representative of UNGOMAP, and a number of foreign diplomats. During the press conference, they disclosed the hostile, intervening acts of the Pakistani military.

The BAKHTAR military section reports that Pakistani military intelligence Officers Muhammad Afzul Gajar and Muhammad Ashraf Bashir told the journalists that with other Pakistani officers, personnel, and spies, they came to the Republic of Afghanistan as part of armed extremist groups to commit terrorism. They said they came to gather intelligence for Pakistan's military service and to take part in armed activities, and were captured by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan. The full press conference will be published later in the press.

News Conference Reported

LD1903230689 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1707 GMT 19 Mar 89

[News conference with Pakistani prisoners Muhammad Afzal Gajar and Muhammad Ashraf "alias Bashir", in Kabul on 19 March; Afzal and Ashraf speak in Urdu with superimposed Dari translation—recorded]

[Text] As you heard, two Pakistani spies who were recently arrested by Afghanistan's security forces while undertaking subversive actions, took part in a press conference today. The press conference was attended by domestic and foreign journalists, a UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan representative, and a number of diplomats from foreign embassies in Kabul. The Pakistani spies have exposed the activities of Pakistan's militarists in our country.

May we draw your attention to this press conference:

[Begin recording] [Presenter] On the one hand Pakistan's authorities have stationed their Armed Forces along our border, and on the other hand, they have committed their 18th and 11th military divisions in a direct attack on Jalalabad.

We have brought here two Pakistani military intelligence agents—Muhammad Afzal Gajar and Muhammad Ashraf, also known as Bashir—who were recently arrested inside our country while committing subversive actions. We let them talk so that, in turn, they introduce themselves and give you information about their activities and the nature of their [word indistinct].

[Afzal] My name is Muhammad Afzal, son of Fazlullahi, and I am a soldier from the Central Intelligence Department [CID]. I live in Punjab in Chakwal District. I am attached to a CID office with its headquarters located in Karachi.

[Ashraf] My name is Muhammad Ashraf. My father's name is 'Abdul Majid. I joined the militia in 1981 and then I was transferred to Baluch Unit No 27 in 1985 and after that I was introduced to intelligence in 1987. After I was transferred to intelligence I was promoted after accomplishing a number of activities.

[Presenter] A question from THE NEW YORK TIMES reporter: Have they come here voluntarily or under pressure to take part in the press conference?

[Answer] I came here to this conference voluntarily.

[Presenter] A question from an Indian journalist: Have you got your military identification [ID] card?

[Answer] My ID card number is 302/222, however I handed it over to Muhammad Aslam before coming here.

[Presenter] The other question is from a Spanish journalist: When you arrived in Afghanistan, did you join any military Pakistani group or were you absolutely alone?

[Answer] When I arrived in Afghanistan three Pakistani officers were escorting me. All three were attached to intelligence, and so am I. All together we were four. A colonel was in charge of our group. Before we entered the territory of Afghanistan three intelligence officials had already arrived in Qandahar.

[Presenter] I want to know when they were arrested and what kinds of activities they engaged in. Can they answer these two questions?

[Answer] Four of us arrived in Afghanistan. After we entered Afghan territory, we were introduced to the Mawlawi 'Abdul Halim's group and then each of us began doing our particular duty. We were divided among a 10-man group and we were told to train them on what to do when they face government forces, how they can approach them and how they can save themselves.

Before I entered Afghan territory, I was introduced in Chaman Hozuri to 'Ubaydullah, a ringleader of the Sayyaf group. He told me that he was going to Afghanistan with me and a series of tasks awaited me there. We entered Afghan territory from the Jankabad region at 2340 via Chaman Hozuri on the border.

[Presenter] Question by the BBC correspondent: When you were arrested, did you have any kind of weapons with you? If so, what kind of arms were they and had you already used them?

[Answer] When I entered Afghanistan, I did not have any weapons on me. All I had was a radio.

[Presenter] My question is for Muhammad Ashraf. How does he assess the current policy of the Pakistani Government? And does he condemn direct Pakistani interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs?

[Ashraf] The Pakistani Government has assigned around 400 intelligence officers to the Qandahar and Spin Buldak regions and is interfering [in Afghanistan's internal affairs]. In Jalalabad and Khowst they have assigned their people to instruct refugees on [the operation of] tanks and artillery. They are arming them instead of only giving them refuge.

[Presenter] Question by the ANIS reporter: My question is for Muhammad Ashraf. Please state your observations on the stationing of Pakistani units on the Afghan border.

[Ashraf] When I was in Pakistan, Pakistani militia members and intelligence personnel were stationed in the Spin Buldak region and were equipped with heavy weapons.

[Presenter] Question by an Indian journalist: Since these two Pakistani officers entered Afghanistan in January, can they provide information on other Pakistani officers who have entered Afghanistan?

[Answer] When I entered Afghan territory, in the Chaman Hozuri region I saw Pakistani militia units. When I was about 12 km inside Afghanistan I encountered a number of

Pakistani militia units. On the way from Chaman Hozuri, they had created a [word indistinct] and about 30 km inside Afghanistan I witnessed heavy artillery fire from Pakistani territory into Afghan territory.

[Presenter] Question by the BBC correspondent: The [word indistinct] BBC correspondent asks Mr Afzal: When you were arrested, did you have any weapons? And if you had, what kind were they? Her second question is: What were your duties at the time of your arrest in Afghanistan?

[Afzal] I was assigned the duty of discovering the location of units inside Afghanistan and the number of vehicles and army equipment. I was also to become acquainted with one or two Afghan Armed Forces personnel and to make them defect to Pakistan.

[Question from unidentified journalist in Dari] My question is directed to Muhammad Ashraf. Can he please tell us about the narcotics smuggling in Pakistan and the role of the Pakistan Government in narcotics and also the role of the so-called mujahidin in this narcotics smuggling?

[Ashraf] During the 10 years of Ziaul Haq's rule and even during Yahya Khan's rule, the drug business such as hashish, herion and cocaine was becoming more widespread every day in Pakistan.

[Question from a Russian reporter in English with superimposed Dari translation] Do you have any information about the presence of Saudi or American, or any other Western advisers around Qandahar?

[Answer] When I entered Afghanistan, I saw four Saudi Arabian advisers, who were cooperating with the 'bdul Halim group. One of these advisers was called 'Abdallah. I cannot remember the names of the other three advisers. I encountered many U.S. advisers inside Pakistan during my activities.

I want to add another point that this Islamic war which has been continuing in Afghanistan for 10 years, has been organized under the supervision of Hamid Gul, head of the Pakistan Intelligence Service, and he is involved in all these issues.

[Presenter] Thank you for your attention. We end our press conference here. [end recording]

BBC Reports Further

BK2003033189 London BBC World Service in English 0215 GMT 20 Mar 89

[From the "Newsreel" program]

[Text] There have been almost daily allegations by the Afghan government and the Soviet Union that Pakistan is directly involved in the fighting for the Afghan city of Jalalabad. Now the government has presented two Pakistanis who, it said, were under investigations of spying and training Afghan guerrillas. (Lise Dusette) reports from Kabul:

[Begin recording] Foreign journalists here have made repeated requests to see Pakistani militia reportedly captured around Jalalabad, the eastern Afghan city where this government says there is massive Pakistani involvement in a 2-week-old guerrilla offensive. But Corporal Afzal and Sergeant Ashraf said they were arrested in the southern province of Qandahar and were not carrying arms at the time. They spoke under the glare of bright ceiling lights to journalists, firing questions in different languages, and Afghan officials who said these were vivid examples of Pakistani interference.

A trembling Corporal Afzal said he had come to Afghanistan with an Afghan refugee to gather military information and to try to persuade Afghan officers to leave for Pakistan. Sergeant Ashraf, appearing less intimidated, said he went to Qandahar in January with three Pakistani soldiers, including a lieutenant colonel. They were giving military training to the mujahidin guerrillas. Both men spoke Pakistan's Urdu language with a convincing accent, but it seemed curious as they were not fluent in Pashto—the language common to parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. It was also puzzling to hear Corporal Afzal (?was with top) police intelligence, which was said to be under military control, and that Sergeant Ashraf was with the special branch—a provincial police unit. Both said they had not been forced to give evidence, but definitive proof has still to be shown here to confirm reports from Afghan, Soviet, and independent sources of direct Pakistani involvement in the battle for Jalalabad. [end recording]

Government, Mujahidin Reaction to ICO Decision

Mojaddedi, Hikmatyar Laud Move

BK1703155789 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The president of the Afghan mujahidin's interim government, Sighatullah Mojaddedi, lauded the decision to include the interim government in the Islamic Conference Organization and described it as a great success for the people of Afghanistan and the Islamic ideology. In a statement to the AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY, he thanked the Islamic countries for this decision.

In Riyadh, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, foreign minister of the interim government, said that granting Afghanistan's seat to the interim government at the Islamic conference is undoubtedly tantamount to the unanimous recognition of this government. He told a news conference that this decision brightens possibilities for the interim government to take up administration in Kabul. This decision will also play a vital role in the peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan issue. Mr Hikmatyar said the interim government wants to stabilize good relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of noninterference in each other's affairs.

Meanwhile, according to reports from Afghanistan, Jalalabad airport has been closed and the mujahidin have regained control of the highway leading to the capital, Kabul. The Kabul administration has asked the citizens of Jalalabad to evacuate, as the mujahidin have increased pressure on this besieged city. Mujahidin sources say that leaflets have been dropped from helicopters asking the city's residents to leave. These sources say that in view of the mujahidin's occupation of this city, the Kabul administration has prepared a plan to heavily bombard the city. Thousands of people have crossed into Pakistan in the past few days.

Mujahidin sources also say that the mujahidin have started implementing a plan to capture another big city in Afghanistan—Herat. There are also reports about fighting in other parts of the country, in Qandahar, Paktia, and Khowst provinces.

Government Condemns Decision

BK1703170089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1647 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 17 (AFP)—The Kabul government Friday condemned the decision by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (ICO) to give a seat to the Afghan resistance, describing the act as a "betrayal."

(In Islamabad however, Pakistan and the Afghan rebel leaders welcomed the decision by OIC foreign ministers to grant Afghanistan's vacant seat to the resistance, calling it a big success.

(Pakistan Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, who led the campaign to give the resistance the seat at the OIC meeting in Riyadh that ended late Thursday, hailed the decision by the world's largest Islamic body.)

Kabul government spokesman Muhammad Nabi Amani said ICO member countries had acted under pressure from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the United States and accused of the Saudi Government of "vote buying."

"This is just to support a government that is already defeated," Mr. Amani told foreign journalists at a press conference here. "It was done under Saudi, U.S. and Pakistani pressure." "It is a fact that Saudi Arabia bought votes, the foreign ministers of the Islamic countries (attending the Riyadh conference) were given golden models of the Mecca shrine and given money," he said.

"In fact the opposition (the mujahidin) has been defeated," Mr. Amani said. "But they just want to show that they still exist." "Yes, we feel betrayed," Mr. Amani said. The Kabul government lost its ICO seat in 1979 when Soviet troops entered Afghanistan.

Earlier, Afghan President Najibullah had cabled the ICO secretary-general and member countries urging them to reinstate the government in Kabul because "the conditions that prevailed at the time of the government's suspension no longer prevailed," in a reference to the withdrawal of Soviet troops, which was completed February 15.

(Talking to newsmen at Karachi airport upon his return from Saudi Arabia, Mr. Yaqub Khan said the invitation to the resistance "to occupy its rightful place" had "crowned with success a cause ... a long struggle waged by the resistance."

(Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the resistance interim government formed last month in Pakistan, thanked the Islamic world for supporting the resistance and said the 45-nation ICO had taken a step which was "a great victory for the Afghan nation as well as the Islamic world."

(Guerrilla commanders fighting for the eastern city of Jalalabad also adopted a resolution at a meeting near the city Friday thanking the ICO countries.

(The commanders meeting with the interim government's national security minister Haji Din Muhammad said the "mujahidin would soon capture Jalalabad and present the strategic city to the interim government."

(The resistance was admitted to the ICO three weeks after the formation of the interim government in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad. The seven parties in the Pakistan-based resistance alliance are taking part in the government, but Iran-based Afghan rebels have not taken up cabinet posts left open for them. Some 35 ICO countries extended support to the interim government, but 10 countries expressed reservations. Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Bahrain have officially recognised the government.

(Rebel Foreign Minister Gulbuddin Hikmatyar took the Afghan seat Thursday, the last day of the conference. The resistance says the interim government is to take over in Kabul after the collapse of the Najibullah government.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan said that with the cooperation of many friendly delegations and "to some extent our own modest efforts, we were able to see the historic, moving and dramatic event of the seating of the Afghan delegation at the rightful place in acclamation and loud applause and shouts of Allah o akbar (God is great).")

Hikmatyar Thanks ICO for Seat

LD1703200389 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 17 Mar (SPA)—Shaykh Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the foreign minister of the Afghan mujahidin government, expressed his gratitude and thanks for the brave resolution the 18th Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers meeting adopted. The meeting ended its proceedings in Riyadh yesterday.

He said: "We thank the ICO for supporting this resolution." In this connection, he praised the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was the first country to recognize the government of the Afghan mujahidin.

At a press conference at the information center in Riyadh last night, he added that the conference decision to allocate the Islamic state of Afghanistan a seat at the ICO will play an active role in reaching a peaceful solution to the Afghan issue. Gulbuddin Hikmatyar stressed that the decision will not only alienate the regime in Kabul from the Afghan people but also from the whole Islamic nation. He said: We call on the regime in Kabul for the sake of the Afghan people not to prolong the bloodshed.

The foreign minister of the interim Afghan government appealed to the Kabul regime peacefully to transfer power to the interim government, which is elected by the people. He went on: "That regime should respect the decision of the ummah to form the interim Islamic government and the decision of the ICO." Hikmatyar emphasized that the allocation of an ICO seat to the Islamic Afghan government is considered to be the collective and practical recognition of the interim mujahidin government.

He announced that his government will pardon the elements that are helping put an end to the war and restore peace in Afghanistan. He said: "God willing, we will guarantee their lives and possessions. They will be safe. They will have an opportunity to take part in the reconstruction of Afghanistan."

Hikmatyar stressed that, God willing, the interim Islamic state of Afghanistan will prove its ability to restore peace and security throughout Afghanistan. He indicated that his government will open a new book of frankness and understanding with all countries.

In his press staement, Hikmatyar stated: Kabul will be our capital, God willing. In the case of a long delay, we can choose any place in Afghanistan. We will hold legislative elections there within 5 months.

The foreign minister of the provisional Afghan government was asked whether his government will grant a pardon to Najibullah if he surrenders. He said: We have declared a general amnesty for everybdoy. We have said that the doors are open. We have pardoned Najibullah's brother, who surrendered to the mujahidin. Najibullah himself has the opportunity to surrender to the mujahidin.

Hikmatyar pointed out that the fact that his government has been granted a seat at the ICO will have a great impact on the mujahidin's morale.

He said: "This means that the Najibullah's government has been rejected by both the people and the ummah. There is no need for its continuation." He said he hoped that the rest of the countries will recognize the Afghan mujahidin government, which represents all Afghan social classes. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on the mujahidin's plan of action regarding the big political victory at the 18th ICO foreign ministers' meeting, Hikmatyar indicated that "we have already embarked on this action plan, in that I was able to meet more than 20 foreign ministers taking part in this meeting and other senior officials. We have sent delegations to a number of countries. Now that we have been allocated a seat at the ICO, we will continue to send a number of delegations to other countries to seek recognition of the Afghan mujahidin."

Hikmatyar pointed out that more than 70 percent of Afghan villages and towns have been destroyed. Moreover, there are millions of refugees and a huge number of destitute people inside the country. Among them there are families of martyrs, orphans, and disabled people. He said that following the liberation of the country and the ousting of the Najibullah government, God willing, we will face a number of problems in rebuilding Afghanistan.

He called on friendly Islamic states and the international community to help rebuild Afghanistan so that Afghan society will play a continuous scientific and civilized role.

Foreign Ministry Statement

LD1703234189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Foreign Ministry statement on ICO resolution to grant Afghanistan seat to opposition government—date not given]

[Text] The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan regards the Islamic Conference Organization's [ICO] provocative decision to grant the seat of the Republic of Afghanistan to the puppet government formed in Pakistan—which ignores the supreme interests and will of the people of Afghanistan and accepted international norms—as void. It strongly denounces this decision which comes at the instigation of the United States, and the efforts and activities of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. This will only result in the continuation of war, fratricide and tensions in our country, the continuation of Pakistani preparations for war against the Republic of Afghanistan. This hampers the search for a political solution.

Granting the seat of the Republic of Afghanistan to a so-called government which is not only rejected by the overwhelming majority of the people of Afghanistan inside and outside the country, but which does not even have the necessary support from the armed groups stationed inside the country themselves, is an irresponsible action which disregards the serious consequences. This so-called provisional government which is being created under the pressure of the Pakistani intelligence service and Saudi Arabia's generous bribes with formidable sums of petro-dollars can in no way represent the will and higher interests of the Muslim and freedom-loving people of Afghanistan.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia worked to get a seat for the government they created in order to bolster the spirits of the armed extremists after they suffered successive shameful defeats, especially in Nangarhar, Qandahar, and Paktia provinces, as well as in other Afghan border provinces. We fully believe that these last-ditch efforts cannot save the [words indistinct] formation of the provisional government from shameful defeat.

The governments of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are following their evil plans. One wants to impose the Wahabi [Saudi] government on our people and the other wants to absorb our country under the guise of a conferation.

At this sensitive juncture in our country's history, the ICO, instead of replying on the positive, constructive call of the people of the Republic of Afghanistan for an end to the war and bloodshed and for the restoration of peace, has fanned up the war and bloodshed in our country by [words indistinct] of a government which is a Pakistani puppet.

In fact, the imposition of such a decision on the ICO violates the objectives embodied in paragraphs 1 and 4 of Article 2 of the ICO Charter which set as the highest objectives the consolidation of Islamic solidarity among Islamic countries and the taking of necessary measures to promote international peace and security. Moreover, this decision violates the principles of respect for self-determination, nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, respect for national sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts through talks, mediation, and compromise as embodied in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of the UN Charter.

Under the present circumstances when all pretexts for the suspension of Afghanistan's membership in the ICO have been eliminated by the complete withdrawal of the Soviet military units on 15 February in accordance with the Geneva accords, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan was expecting this conference to restore its rightful membership. However, most regrettably, the imposition of this prearranged scenario on the ICO by Washington, Islamabad, and Riyadh further aggravates the bloodshed in our country and other regional clashes. It runs completely counter to the spirit and stance of the majority of Islamic countries, the final political resolution of the Nicosia session of the Nonaligned Movement's foreign ministers, the 43d UN General Assembly's resolution on Afghanistan and the duties given to the UN secretary general.

The Republic of Afghanistan, as a nonaligned Islamic country and UN member with infallible faith in the consolidation of Islamic solidarity and respect for the principles and objectives embodied in the ICO Charter, regards this unjust decision as blatant interference in the internal affairs of our country, and considers this decision as invalid and worthless. The Republic of Afghanistan fully believes that the political pressure and material bribes of Saudi Arabia will not continue to dominate the ICO. Sooner or later, the Republic of Afghanistan will win its way into this organization.

Kabul-Mujahidin Battle for Jalalabad Continues

Heavy Rocket Fire on Airport

BK1703162689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1611 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 17 (AFP)—Afghan mujahidin fired some 8,200 rounds of heavy artillery on the eastern strategic city of Jalalabad, a government spokesman said here Friday. Some 7,000 of the rounds landed in and around the airport, said the spokesman. The rockets and other missiles have hit the city in the last 24 hours, leaving six soldiers and 12 civilians dead.

The spokesman "categorically" denied the mujahidin had managed to take parts of the city and the airport. He had said that two days ago rebels had penetrated Jalalabad, but failed to take any strategic post. The spokesman said 11 helicopters had managed to land at the airport two days ago carrying volunteer soldiers from the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to reinforce the city's defenders.

Heavy fighting was taking place some 15 kilometres (nine miles) to the east of Jalalabad, at Adi Ghar and Chaparhar. Mujahidin casualties were put at 164 and 126 wounded.

164 Rebels, Advisers Killed

LD1703175689 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] A competent source in the Armed Forces told the BIA military section that the last of the enemy frontline troops and Pakistani militia are increasing their heavy weapons shelling of security posts and residential areas in Jalalabad.

The Pakistani military authorities dispatch personnel from the units and subunits of their Army's 18th Division, wearing local clothes, to the rear lines of the front to assist the warmongering extremist groups in their war and killing. Pakistani Armed Forces vehicles have been used extensively to supply weapons and ammunition.

The courageous units and subunits of the Afghan Armed Forces stationed in Jalalabad city regard defending the country and foiling foreign aggression as their national mission. With courage they have been repulsing the enemy attacks and inflicting crushing and deadly blows.

The Armed Forces source added that the enemy's armed forces, with direct assistance and instruction from Pakistani Army personnel and Pakistani advisers, and those from other imperialist countries, fired 1,200 heavy weapons shells on Jalalabad city, including 7,000 at the airport, Daruntah, Serah Rud, and Chaprahar's residential areas and security posts during the past 24 hours. The brave units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in this province retaliated with artillery fire and other heavy weapons fire, giving the enemy a resolute and crushing reply.

The units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in Jalalabad city, assisted by powerful Air Force raids, inflicted a heavy loss of life on the aggressors and pushed them back in a number of directions.

During these operations, six soldiers were martyred and a number wounded. Twelve local people, including 4 children and 3 women were martyred, and 16 others, including women and children, were wounded. As a result of the enemy's heavy weapons' fire seven houses and two mosques were destroyed, and another mosque was damaged.

The report adds that units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in this province have replied to enemy atacks by firing heavy weapons and pushed the enemy back in the directon of Adi Ghar and Chapraihar. During this operation, 164 enemy men were killed, including a number of commanders and foreign advisers. Furthermore, 126 extremists were seriously injured; 4 missile units, 4 artillery positions, 1 [word indistinct], 1 supply convoy with 8 vehicles, 13 rocket launchers, 2 communications units, 1 command post, and 11 strong enemy positions were destroyed.

Reliable information says that despite increasing pressure exerted by higher positions of the Pakistani Army and intelligence service to intensify the war, a large number of armed opposition groups, who now find themselves under the order of Pakistani officers, look at recent developments with disappointment and boredom. In expressing dissatisfaction with the intervention and direct participation of the Pakistani Army in Jalalabad, they do not show that much interests in taking part in the war.

The most recent report says that the Armed Forces stationed in Nangarhar are enjoying high combat morale and their positions strengthen with each passing day.

Rebels Capture 2 Security Posts

BK1803025889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The mujahidin reportedly captured two Kabul regime security posts west of Jalalabad and launched major offensives in the southern and western areas of the city.

Reports say that Afghan Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Asef Delawar has personally taken control of military operations in Jalalabad.

The mujahidin have also besieged Meymaneh, the largest city in Faryab Province, and destroyed 18 Kabul regime posts in the area. Herat city was also reportedly shelled. A huge explosion occurred at the residence of an official of the Kabul regime secret agency, KHAD, which shook the entire city and caused considerable loss of life.

In the Wonay District of Herat Province, two Kabul regime commanders and 500 soldiers joined the mujahidin.

Rebels Control Road to Kabul

BK1803132189 Hong Kong AFP in English 1300 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 18 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas foiled a new government attempt to reinforce trooops in Jalalabad as fighting raged around the eastern garrison city and its airport, mujahidin sources said Saturday [18 March]. An army convoy sent from Kabul failed to join the main force and troops had been stalled since Friday at Sarowbi, 60 kilometers (37 miles) from Jalalabad, they said. Hundreds of guerrillas squatting along the road from beleaguered Jalalabad to Sarowbi were impeding its advance, they said.

The highway linking the capital with Jalalabad had been cut for the past four days, they said, adding that some 500 heavily armed mujahidin guerrillas were in "complete control" of a 40-kilometer (25-mile) portion from Sarowbi to Shur Khaneh.

Kabul aircraft heavily bombed mujahidin positions on the highway, causing casualties, the sources said. At least two surface-to-surface long-range Scud missiles fired from Kabul landed in the Adi Ghar farm area late Friday but caused little damage, they said.

The sources said that at the airport the mujahidin broke through a cordon around a strategic post after destroying mines seeded near it. "Capture of the post has further weakened the government position," one source said. The mujahidin had crossed a barbed-wire fence two days earlier to enter the prohibited area. Other sources confirmed that the mujahidin were cautious in their advance because government troops had mined vast areas at the airport. "Only a few roads were spared from anti-personnel mines," they said.

The sources said fighting for control of Jalalabad had been uninterrupted since the mujahidin launched a major assault 12 days ago, and they captured two more posts in the Chaparhar area.

Meanwhile the AFGHAN ISLAMIC PRESS, quoting arrested Afghan soldiers, said government officials and ruling communist party members in Jalalabad had asked the Kabul authorities to vacate the city but the government troops wanted to continue fighting as long as possible. The agency added that Kabul leaders were blocking an evacuation, and that it appeared both sides were determined not to retreat. It said "morale is very high" among the resistance, which each day had to turn away hundreds of refugees offering to join them.

Rebels Foil Kabul Reinforcement

BK1803164089 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say, the mujahidin have foiled another attempt by Kabul regime to reinforce its troops in Jalalabad. An Army convoy sent from Kabul has been held up at Sarowbi, 60 km from Jalalabad since yesterday. At the Jalalabad airport, the mujahidin broke through a cordon around a strategic post after destroying mines seeded near it. The capture of the post has further weakened the Kabul regime's position.

Fall of Airport 'Imminent'

LD1803181589 Tehran IRNA in English 1745 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 18, IRNA—The fall of the Jalalabad airport now seems imminent with Afghan mujahidin destroying three outposts and infiltrating the airport last night and today. According to the latest news reaching here from the war fronts, the mujahidin are continuing their battle to fully liberate the airport.

In a separate operation on March 15, the mujahidin took control of two highways connecting Herat to Sirdel [name as received] and Towraghoudi in an attack on government troops. A large number of Afghan soldiers were killed and wounded and ten tanks destroyed.

In related news, three Afghan officers along with 300 progovernment militiamen defected to the mujahidin at "Aqchah" governorate in Jowzjan Province last week.

Rebels Occupy 8 Military Posts

BK1903024189 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The mujahidin in Afghanistan in their attacks on Jalalabad have captured eight military posts of the Kabul regime around the city. According to reports, hand-to-hand fighting is going on at Deh Gol, north of Jalalabad, to gain control of a bridge on the Kabul river. The mujahidin are increasing pressure on the city from the Samar Kheyl side in the north.

According to Soviet television, nearly 20,000 mujahidin are now massed around Jalalabad. The television reported that it is difficult to say whether it will be possible to defend the city against the mujahidin offensive.

The mujahidin attacked (Kowt-e Mirza) in Samangan Province, blowing up a Kabul regime security post and tank. They also attacked the Bagram airfield and inflicted heavy damage on the installations.

Rebels Capture Behsud Positions

BK2003024789 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, fighting continued around Jalalabad yesterday and the mujahidin advanced slightly toward the airport and strengthened their positions in the southern and western areas. Earlier, in the night, the mujahidin entered the airport by crossing over the mined area around the airport east of Jalalabad, but they had to vacate the area during the day because of bombing by Kabul regime aircraft.

Two Soviet Scud missiles were fired from Kabul toward Jalalabad, but they caused no damage. The mujahidin are gradually advancing and are capturing government positions one by one in the Behsud area, 3 km north of the city.

According to another report, the mujahidin have attacked Qandahar and Shindand airports with rockets. Kabul regime aircraft use these airports to defend the besieged city of Jalalabad.

'Poor Organization' Noted

BK2003082489 Hong Kong AFP in English 0800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[By Gilles Bertin]

[Text] Islamabad, March 20 (AFP)—Poor organisation among mujahidin guerrilla groups and some factions' brutal treatment of prisoners is hampering their bid to take Jalalabad and pushing up the casualty figures, analysts said here. A major mujahidin assault on the strategic garrison city which began two weeks ago was poorly coordinated, with one moderate Muslim guerrilla group jumping the gun and attacking a day early, forcing other mujahidin commanders to hurriedly join in, diplomatic sources said.

"The mujahidin are progressing slowly towards Jalalabad but at the cost of heavy losses," said one diplomat. Diplomats estimate that more than 10,000 Afghan troops are defending Jalalabad, Afghanistan's third largest city some 150 kilometers (90 miles) from Kabul and 65 kilometers (40 miles) from the Pakistani border. They say that some 1,500 mujahidin have died so far in the battle for the city, which has been marked by a lack of coordination.

Experts here say, for example, that after the mujahidin took the garrison of Samar Kheyl, some 10 kilometers (six miles) east of Jalalabad, in the early stages of the battle, the arrival of several disorganised guerrilla groups who had crossed the border from Pakistan a few days earlier increased the confusion and the losses among the mujahidin forces. Some resistance groups even tried for two or three days to overrun the airport by charging across minefields, they say.

Afghan guerrilla leaders and Pakistani military advisers had drawn up a careful plan of attack for the well-defended city, but many tribal groups and small guerrilla groups who only take orders from their own leaders then arrived from neighbouring provinces, determined to take part in the assault, experts say.

Mujahidin hopes of mass defections from the Afghan Army in the face of their determination to defeat the government of President Najibullah after Soviet troops withdrew from the country February 15 have also been blighted by the brutal treatment of prisoners by some of the rebel groups, they say. Mujahidin groups have often executed captives. When guerrillas overran an Afghan post at Towr Kham on the border with Pakistan in December, they killed more than 75 government troops and hacked their bodies to bits, diplomatic and resistance sources said. An unidentified resistance group shot and killed 17 Afghan officers taken prisoner in the early stages of the battle for Jalalabad while they were being taken towards the Pakistani border with 350 other prisoners, diplomatic sources said. The mujahidin were also said to have ill-treated civilians when they briefly held the town of Konduz in the north of the country last year, diplomatic sources said.

Moderate Muslim groups within the mujahidin and diplomats say that much of this brutality is due to the fact that the guerrillas include some tribal groups and hundreds of Arab Muslim extremists including Palestinians, Saudi Arabians and Egyptians who believe they are fighting a jihad or holy war.

Despite these problems, an increasing number of Afghan troops are said to be defecting to the resistance in areas where the mujuhidin commanders are well-organised and have their men under full control. The moderate fundamentalist Jamiyat-e Eslami group said Monday that 208 Afghan troops, including 43 officers, had defected last Tuesday in the mountainous Salang region in the north, site of a strategic highway linking Kabul with the Soviet border.

Hikmatyar Hopes Jalalabad Falls in 'Few Weeks'

BK1903155689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Mr Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, foreign minister of the interim government of Afghanistan, has said that the mujahidin are approaching Jalalabad very cautiously so as to prevent bloodshed. He expressed the hope that the mujahidin will occupy the city within a few weeks. Mr Hikmatyar added that the Kabul regime has used its entire resources and thrown its entire force into the war to defend the city, but the continuous progress of the mujahidin proves that they will soon enter Jalalabad.

Kabul Reports Military Situation in Provinces

Fighting, Casualties Updated

LD1803182589 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The extensive attack on Jalalabad city which Pakistani soldiers and the armed extremist opposition groups linked to them planned to complete in 2 days by seizing the city is still continuing and is now in its 12th day. The enemy has not succeeded in implementing this plan. The failure of this plan designed and directed by the Pakistani military intelligence service, which has resulted in the heavy loss of enemy life, has caused serious differences of views among the leaders of Pakistan's military intelligence service, authorities in the Pakistani Government, and the chieftains of the organizations dependant on Pakistan.

The Republic of Afghanistan Armed Forces' resolute and crushing resistance in Nangarhar Province has seriously affected the morale of the enemy groups, sapping their courage to face up to the Afghan forces.

A reliable Armed Forces source told BAKHTAR's military section that during the past 24 hours attacks with rockets and other heavy weapons guided by Pakistani advisers continued against Jalalabad city and its surroundings. As a result, 7 inhabitants were martyred and 17 were wounded, including 11 women and children. Five personnel of the Armed Forces were also wounded in these shellings. Five houses, one mosque, and one shrine were destroyed.

The report adds that the courageous units of the Armed Forces counterattacked enemy positions, fortifications, depots, and troop concentrations, killing 297 invaders and wounding more than 110.

Two command posts, 7 communications sets, 9 rockets, 8 mortars, 2 anti-aircraft weapons, 4 artillery pieces, 18 rocket launchers, 2 ammunition depots, and 2 enemy vehicles were destroyed; 31 mortars, 18 boxes of small-arms ammunition, 1,800 rounds of DShK ammunition, 11 rockets, and 3 rocket launchers were seized by the Afghan forces. Eight enemy troops were captured with 600,000 Pakistani rupees.

According to information from the enemy's rear area, a significant number of outstanding opposition commanders, including commander 'Abdullah Jan from Khalis' group; Commander (Folad) from Gulbuddin's group; and Commander (Hayatullah) from Mahaz-e Milli were killed. Western media, quoting the armed opposition groups, have admitted the loss of these commanders.

BAKHTAR acquired another report from the Armed Forces which states that the situation is normal in most regions of the country with the exception of Qandahar Province, where as a result of Armed Forces mopping up operations, 13 enemies were killed and 19 wounded. During this operation, 4 enemy bunkers and 11 stongholds were destroyed and 4 rocket units, 6 mortars, 7,000 rounds of various ammunition, and 120 rockets were seized by the Armed Forces.

According to another report, as a result of internal differences among the extremist groups, fierce clashes took place in the region of Wonay District of Herat Province. Five men of the belligerent parties were killed and seven wounded.

The brave youths of the country are continuing to join the Armed Forces to defend the homeland and to repulse foreign aggression. Some 221 youths eligible for conscription and call-up, have reported to the military commissariats in the capital and provinces during the past 24 hours. After enlisting they joined the relevant units.

215 'Invaders' Killed

LD1903192489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The BAKHTAR military section reports that over the last 24 hours the enemy has continued to fire assorted heavy weapons at Jalalabad and the surrounding areas. As a result, 3 Jalalabad residents, including 2 children, were martyred, and 11, including 3 children and 4 women, were wounded. Eight members of the Armed Forces were also wounded. One mosque, one pharmacy, four shops, and five apartments were damaged.

As a result of retaliatory actions taken against enemy strongholds, gathering places, and arms caches, 215 invaders were killed and more than 64 were wounded. The following were destroyed: 3 missiles, 11 rocket launchers, 7 guns, 9 recoilless guns, 4 mortars, 5 armored vehicles, 18 strongholds, 1 supply convoy of 19 vehicles, and 2 clothing and foodstuff depots.

The morale of the Afghan forces stationed in Nangarhar Province is high as they heroically defend their positions and maintain control of the situation.

According to another report, during the last 24 hours the armed extremist groups linked to Pakistan have fired 187 missiles at Qandahar city and the surrounding areas. As a result, three people, including one woman, were martyred and eight people, including two children and two women, were wounded. In retaliatory action by the artillery corps, 11 extremists including 1 commander were killed and a number of others have been wounded. Some four rocket launchers and five enemy strongholds were destroyed. The Afghan Armed Forces bombarded enemy gathering places in response to heavy weapons fire on the city. Seven armed group members linked to Pakistan were killed and a number were wounded.

Heavy weapons fire by the enemy on Khowst city and the garrison resulted in the martyring of one resident and one soldier.

In Helmand Province, one truck and one tractor carrying weapons and ammunition for the enemy were captured and another truck was destroyed by the Armed Forces.

A report from Herat Province states that Armed Forces strikes on extremist gathering places resulted in 10 warmongers killed and 6 wounded. One enemy mortar and one ZK-1 were destroyed.

In other parts of the country, security is being maintained and convoys of transport vehicles are travelling between Kabul and Hayratan without incident.

As a result of Armed Forces strikes in Nangarhar Province on gathering places of armed extremist groups in the Lowya Kala region, 40 extremists were killed and 6 were wounded. Their weapons and ammunition caches were destroyed. (Jabit Jikrullah), a ringleader of the extremist group, was among those killed.

During another operation in Nangarhar Province, 13 extremists, including (Mawlawi 'Abdul Samad) and (Moa'lem Amin), were wounded. In another Armed Forces operation in Behsud, 52 Jamiyat-e Eslami extremists were killed and 60 were wounded.

Rebels Attack Qandahar, Shindand Base Airports

BK1903145289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1446 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 19 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas unleashed rocket attacks on the airports in Qandahar and Shindand, reportedly used by government planes flying raids to defend the besieged city of Jalalabad, resistance sources said Sunday. Diplomats here said the attacks on Qandahar in the southeast and Shindand in the northwest were meant to disturb planes flying missions against mujahidin positions north, south and east of Jalalabad.

Some 23 soldiers have been killed in attacks in the past two days on Qandahar airport, said resistance sources, and fighting is underway along the road linking the city to airport, said the pro-rebel AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA).

The Shindand airbase in the western province of Herat had been attacked for the first time in months, said ANA, adding that the road linking the base with the city of Herat had been cut.

The two-week-old battle for the strategic eastern garrison city of Jalalabed continued Sunday, with the resistance and forces of the Moscow-backed government in Kabul both claiming successes. Mujahidin field commander Rahim Vardak of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA) said Saturday that the city would be taken within a week, the pro-resistance Afghan Media Resources Center (AMRC) said.

The rebels were able to cross mined areas around the airport, east of Jalalabad, and enter it at night, but had to evacuate during the day because of bombardment by the Afghan Government planes, said diplomats here. In the region of Beshud, three kilometers (1.5 miles) north of the city, the mujahidin advance slowly, taking government positions one by one.

More than 1,500 mujahidin have died in the Jalalabad battle, diplomats say. Hospitals in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, near the Afghan border, admit between 100 and 150 wounded guerrillas a day, hospital sources say.

In Jalalabad the resistance had counted on important desertions in the first days of combat, but the "execution" earlier this month by non-identified rebels of several dozen government soldiers and officers had diminished the rate of desertions, specialists said. Major-General Barakzay Totakhel was killed Friday at his headquarters in Jalalabad by soldiers secretly working for the resistance, said AMRC. This report could not be independently confirmed.

The government fired Saturday two Soviet-supplied Scud missiles on the Jalalabad region from Kabul, but did not cause damage, said AMRC.

Mohtat Urges Response to Pakistani 'Interference'

OW1903110889 Tokyo KYODO in English 1033 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 19 KYODO—Afghan Vice President 'Abdul Hamid Mohtat has accused Pakistan of what he described as direct interference by the Pakistani Army and intelligence service in Afghan affairs following the withdrawal of Soviet troops on February 15. In an interview with KYODO news service here on Saturday, he made the accusation in his reference to the recent armed attack by antigovernment Afghan guerrillas near Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan.

Mohtat said the government's forces are strong enough to withstand guerrilla attacks, but he said that unless foreign interference stops, the Afghan war would never end. Mohtat, who served as Afghan ambassador to Japan for nine years until 1987, called on Japan and other countries to understand the current Afghan situation and press Pakistan to stop what he termed as interference. At the same time, he said the Kabul government is ready to open direct negotiations with Pakistan, including talks between President Najibullah and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

If Pakistan stops interfering in Afghan affairs and genuinely desires the establishment of friendly relations with Afghanistan, the Kabul government would agree to come to any-level negotiating table, Mohtat said in the interview. Mohtat said that some Western countries have the ability to help stop the current bloodshed in Afghanistan, but said that such countries are merely watching the killing among Afghans as spectators.

He said the Kabul government has been conducting both direct and indirect talks with several guerrilla commanders and hinted that it has reached agreement with some guerrilla groups on the halt to armed attacks on convoys transporting daily necessities. Such groups believe that the Soviet withdrawal has removed the need for fighting among Afghans, Mohtat said. He suggested that guerrillas conducting such negotiations with the government include those groups which have been active in the areas north of Kabul or surrounding the capital.

India

Gandhi Says Thakkar Report To Be 'Made Public'

BK1703161289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The full text of the Thakkar Commission report is to be made public. This was announced by the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, in the Lok Sabha today. In a statement, he said as the House reassembles on the 27th of this month after recess, steps will be taken immediately to lay the report on the table of the House. The announcement was received by the members by thumping of desks.

Giving reasons as to why the report was not made public earlier, Mr Gandhi pointed out that it was Mr Justice Thakkar who had made this recommendation. Mr Thakkar was of the view that his report should not be public as it could prejudice the criminal investigations that were then underway.

Mr Gandhi told the House that he has inquired about the current stage of the criminal investigations. He was informed that the investigations are now complete and necessary follow up action will be taken soon. Therefore, the prime minister said, the release of the report will no longer prejudice the course of criminal investigations.

The prime minister said that a version of what is alleged to be in a portion of the report has reached the press. This is fueling, willful distortion, malicious innuendo, and irresponsible character assassination.

Mr Gandhi pointed out that the recommendation of Mr Justice Thakkar not to make the report public was accepted by the government. The Lok Sabha, which was informed of the decision, determined that it was not expedient in the interest of the security of the country and in the public interest to lay the report on the table of the house.

Mr Gandhi recalled that on the 31st of October 1984, the country suffered a national tragedy, while he suffered a personal one. He said the events of the last few days have caused the people immense distress.

Mr Gandhi said he on his part has relived the terrible trauma of that time. The Thakkar Commission investigated the events leading to the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Mr Gandhi said those events are of deepest personal concern to him and his family.

Probe Into 'Leak' Demanded

BK2003042289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] A number of present and former members of Parliament have demanded a thorough probe into what they called deliberate leak of a part of the Thakkar Commission report [on assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi]. In a statement, they alleged that the leak had been engineered by a former union minister. They said no democratic government can function if the principle of collective responsibility is not honored and the oath of secrecy is treated as a mere formality. The leaders said nowhere in the world did collective responsibility flow from the right of every minister to have access to all the information that comes to the prime minister. The signatories include Mr Aziz Qureshi, Mr K.D. Sultanpuri, Mr Digvijay Singh, Mr Manoranjan Bhagat, Chaudhary Sunder Singh, and Chaudhary Ram Prakash.

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr K.K. Tiwari, has also made a similar demand.

Tibetan Monks Protest Martial Law in Homeland

BK1803090089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0849 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 18 (AFP)—Some 200 Tibetan monks holding anti-Chinese signs marched here Saturday in a silent protest against martial law in their homeland.

The protestors, dressed in traditional maroon-coloured robes, marched about three kilometres (1.8 miles) to India Gate, a war memorial in the city centre after assembling at the income tax office.

Scores of police roped the marchers off at the memorial, preventing them from proceeding towards the boat club lawns near Parliament where they had intended to end the peaceful demonstration.

The monks then sat on lawns surrounding India Gate, holding up signs urging China to lift martial law clamped in Lhasa on February 14 and calling on the United Nations to intervene to settle the Tibetan conflict, witnesses said.

The monks distributed copies of an open letter to Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng which asked him to lift martial law, release all Tibetan political prisoners unconditionally and allow human rights groups to visit Tibet.

"The use of force and might will never succeed in subduing the human spirit," the letter said. "Instead it will create more problems and disgrace to your government and people."

Tibetans would never accept Chinese rule, the letter added. "It is our right and sacred duty to fight against the injustice and achieve freedom."

The monks also addressed a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar appealing for U.N. intervention to lift martial law and send a U.N. fact-fiding team to investigate alleged human rights abuses in Tibet.

China clamped martial law following three days of pro-independence rioting in Lhasa, which left 16 people dead by official count. Western travellers have said the death toll may be as high as 50 to 60.

New Treaty on Trade, Transit Offered to Nepal

BK1803161889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] India has offered to negotiate immediately a fresh treaty on trade and transit with Nepal. The Indo-Nepal treaty on transit expires next Thursday, while the treaty on trade expired on the 23d of March last year.

An official spokesman told newsmen in New Delhi today that the government's attention has been drawn to a statement issued by the spokesman of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Nepal yesterday. He said pending negotiations for working out a mutually acceptable treaty on trade, India had agreed to the extension of the earlier treaty by 6 months and subsequently for a further period till the conclusion of a new treaty. He said the new draft was negotiated in October last. It was initialled pending certain further requirements to be met by the Nepalese Government.

Over the last 6 months, India has been taking up periodically with Nepal the question on the need to fulfill these requirements, including the issue of some notifications. But so far, Nepal has taken no action on these requests. We are compelled to take the action that is necessary. The spokesman pointed out that India has always valued its special relationship with Nepal under the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. It has done everything to live up to the letter and spirit of this treaty. But good neighborliness implies a degree of mutual sensitivity and concern for the interests of both the countries. This is particularly necessary if the special relationship between India and Nepal is to be maintained, he added.

Sikh Separatists Expand Expatriate Council

BK1903094689 Hong Kong AFP in English 0928 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Amritsar, India, March 19 (AFP)—Sikh militants have expanded a council of Sikhs living abroad set up to guide and promote internationally their violent campaign for a homeland in northern India, a militant group said Sunday.

The Council of Khalistan, largely inactive since its formation here in September 1987, has been expanded from 11 to 24 members from six countries, the statement from the Panthic Committee, the Sikh separatists' shadowy underground cabinet, said.

It said the council's expansion was aimed at "stepping up the struggle at the international level" and that the council has been asked to "elicit support of various countries for the struggle" for a Sikh homeland called Khalistan, or land of the pure, in the northern Indian state of Punjab.

Gurmit Singh Aulakh, a U.S.-based Sikh, heads the council which now consists of 11 Sikhs living in the United States, four from Canada, five from Britain, one from Singapore, two from the Netherlands and one from West Germany.

The statement announcing the council's expansion was signed by Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, head of the Panthic Committee.

Indian police classify Mr. Manochahal as an A-category terrorist and have offered a 100,000-rupee (6,666-dollar) reward for his capture.

Violence linked to the Sikh separatist movement has left more than 280 people dead so far this year. More than 2,200 people were killed in separatist violence last year.

Violent Incidents Continue in Punjab State

Bomb Injures 7 in Srinagar

BK1803092289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In Srinagar, seven people were injured in a bomb burst in Maharaja Bazaar area yesterday evening. Some shops were also damaged in the explosion. Police believe it to be the handiwork of some subversive elements.

17 'Terrorists' Arrested

BK1803155989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Security forces in Punjab, have arrested 17 more terrorists since last night. Eight of them were nabbed in Kapurthala District and the rest in other parts of the state. Some arms and ammunition was also recovered.

Elsewhere in the state, terrorists shot dead three persons.

'Dreaded Terrorist' Killed Rivals

BK1903031989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] In Punjab, the police have recovered the body of a dreaded terrorist, Jagjit Singh Gill, from village Pandori in Kapurthala District. He is reported to have been killed by a rival gang of terrorists. Elsewhere in the state, terrorists shot dead two farmers.

4 Killed by 'Militants' 19 Mar

BK1903082189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] In Punjab, terrorists shot dead four persons and seriously injured another three in separate incidents last night. According to an official spokesman, terrorists struck out at a house in village Lakhne in Amritsar District and shot dead a couple. Another woman was seriously injured in the incident. In Gurdaspur District, a farmer was killed, while in Faridkot District terrorists shot dead and seriously injured [as heard] two farmers. Elsewhere in the state, security forces have arrested five terrorists and recovered some arms and ammunition from their possession.

431 'Intruders' Killed on Punjab Border in 1989

BK1703150689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1402 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 17 (AFP)—Indian Border Guards last year shot dead 431 "intruders" from Pakistan and pushed back 3,009, the government said here Friday [17 March].

Nearly 201 of the dead were killed in gun battles along the border between Pakistan and India's northern Punjab State, where Sikh separatists are fighting for a homeland, an official statement said.

The other killings by the Border Security Force (BSF) occurred on the Indo-Pakistani border in the states of Gujarat in the west, northern Jammu and Kashmir and northwestern Rajasthan.

The statement did not say who the "intruders" were, but the term is often used to refer to Sikh separatists, illegal aliens or drugs and arms smugglers.

India has accused Pakistan, with which it has fought three wars, of arming and backing the Sikh separatists. Islamabad has denied the charge.

The statement said the BSF caught and handed over to police for "necessary action" 467 "intruders."

The BSF, a paramilitary force which guards India's land border, also seized 126 kilograms (277 pounds) of gold, some 670 kilograms (1,500 pounds) of heroin and 920 kilograms (2,000 pounds) of hashish on the Indo-Pakistani frontier in 1988, it added.

Barbed Wire Fencing at Punjab Border Resumes

BK1703164989 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Construction of the 120-km barbed wire fence along the sensitive areas of the Indo-Pakistan border in Punjab has been resumed. The work had earlier been suspended due to heavy rains and floods. Aimed at curbing the terrorism in the state, the 15 crore rupee project will be completed by the end of this month.

A similar fence is being erected in the border areas of the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan.

Fencing Along Indo-Bangladesh Border Begins

BK1803091889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In Assam, barbed wire fencing along the Indo-Bangladesh border has begun. The state chief minister, Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, formally inaugurated the erection at Sonarhat in Dhubri District this morning.

Our Guwahati correspondent reports that the fence to be constructed in the Assam sector of the Indo-Bangladesh border is a commitment made in the Assam accord to check infiltration from across the border.

Meanwhile, the central government has released 26,700,000 rupees for the fencing by which 36 km of areas in Dhubri District will be covered. The state government wants to complete the erection work before the monsoon.

Security Tightened in Assam Over Strike Call

BK1903091089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] In Assam, security has been tightened throughout the state in view of the proposed 48-hour bundh [strike] called by a faction of the All Bodo Students Union from tomorrow. The Northeast Frontier Railway has either cancelled or regulated its train services during the bundh period.

Meanwhile, a faction of the All Bodo Students Union has refused to participate in the all party meeting convened by the chief minister, Mr Profulla Kumar Mahanta, on Thursday to discuss the Bodo problem. The Center has agreed to send 14 additional companies of the CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] to Assam on the request of the state government.

Official sources told our Guwahati correspondent that the additional companies will be reaching the state within as couple of days and will be deployed in the troubled hit areas of Kokrajhar and Darrang districts.

11 Injured in Bomb Explosion

BK1903164089 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Eleven people were injured when a powerful bomb exploded in the Kalaigaon Bazar in the Udalgiri subdivision in Assam today. All the injured have been admitted to hospital. This is the second explosion in the state within the last 3 days. Three people were killed in a bomb blast at Tinsukia on Friday. [passage omitted]

Finance Minister Explains Defense Allocation Cut

BK1703131989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The finance minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, has asserted that there would be no compromise on the country's defense preparedness. He told the Lok Sabha today that the cut in the defense allocation for next year is intended to reiterate India's resolve to solve disputes with neighbors through negotiations rather than confrontation. He, however, made it clear that the country's security will receive top priority.

Mr Chavan was replying to the debate on the general budget for 1989-90.

The finance minister announced the government's intention to set up monitoring cells to eliminate middlemen in the anti-poverty program.

Iran

Majlis Speaker 'Chosen' To Run for President

LD1903124589 Tehran IRNA in English 1241 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 19, IRNA—Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani has been chosen by one of the main political groups to run for president in the election due this summer.

"We had a meeting in which the candidacy of Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani for the Presidency was discussed and it was unanimously accepted," said Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahdi Karrubi.

He said in an interview with the daily KAYHAN that Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who is the speaker of the Majlis and the acting Armed Forces commander in chief, did not object.

Deputy Majlis Speaker Karrubi did not give the exact date of the combatant clergymen society meeting when the decision was taken.

"My personal position is that Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani is the most suitable and competent person for the job," Karrubi said.

Gorbachev Sends Thanks for Aid to Quake Victims

LD1803180689 Tehran IRNA in English 1736 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 18, IRNA—In a message to President 'Ali Khamene'i Saturday, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev praised the Islamic Republic of Iran for its humanitarian aid to the quake-stricken people in the Republic of Armenia.

The Soviet leader said in his message that the assistance once again proved the priority of human values in the today's world.

He also felt assured that Tehran-Moscow ties would further expand in various fields in the future.

UK Minister Admits Rushdie Book 'Blasphemous'

LD1803112589 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] British Foreign Office Minister William Waldegrave admitted yesterday that the book "The Satanic Verses" includes blasphemous passages. According to REUTER, his remarks, broadcast by the Arab section of the BBC, were the most strongly worded condemnation of that book by a British Government official since the publication of Rushdie's book aroused the wrath of the Islamic world.

Waldegrave, who was speaking after a unanimous position was adopted by the foreign ministers of Islamic countries with regard to the Western conspiracy against Islam, added that he profoundly regrets this issue which has created problems between Britain and the Islamic world.

We remind you that Margaret Thatcher and Geoffrey Howe, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, admitted last month that the book was offensive. However, neither of them mentioned the blasphemous nature of the book.

ICO Conference Resolution 'Major Victory'

LD1703185189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The meeting of the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] foreign ministers ended its 3 days of deliberations at 2400 Tehran time last night. [passage omitted]

With the conclusion of the ICO conference, political and news circles of the world, including such major English media as the REUTER news agency and THE INDEPENDENT newspaper, have described the outcome of the meeting as a major victory for the Islamic Republic of Iran. It should be added that the committee in charge of conference preparations had removed the issue of "The Satanic Verses" from the agenda. This issue was viewed with indifference by those taking part in the conference. However, after the arrival in Riyadh of the Iranian delegation and the strongly worded request of that delegation for placing the study of the Zionist conspiracy in publishing "The Satanic Verese" on the agenda, the committee then decided to refer this issue to the cultural committee. However, again as a result of efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran and in view of the political dimension of the conspiracy regarding the publication of that book, it was decided that the issue should be discussed by the ICO political committee.

Finally, that committee issued a special statement condemning "The Satanic Verese" as a blasphemous book and described its author as an apostate, bearing in mind that according to Islam an apostate's blood is to be shed and that it is necessary to kill him. This position was a confirmation of the religious edict of Imam Khomeyni and of the revolutionary action of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the need to stand against the supporters of this Zionist conspiracy. Now the ICO has adopted a proper position and taken the first step in the struggle against this conspiracy. The Muslims of the world are expecting to see subsequent steps in this connection.

The other success of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the meeting of the ICO foreign ministers was the rejection of a request by Tariq 'Aziz, the foreign minister of the Iraqi regime. He had asked that the issue of the exchange of Iranian and Iraqi POW's should be discussed in the conference—outside the framework of UN Resolution 598, On the other hand, the issue of investigating the situation in Afghanistan and giving the seat belonging to Afghanistan to the Afghan resistance groups was another Iranian demand. This Islamic Republic of Iran has always placed the defense of the Muslim Afghan nation among its political priorities. Even at the height of the imposed war and at a time when the cities of Islamic Iran were under enemy bombardment, Iran's support for a comprehensive government in Afghanistan continued. Now, after the withdrawal of the occupying forces and on the eve of the Afghan nation's victory, the Islamic Republic of Iran is calling for the establishment of a comprehensive government, composed of all groups of Muslim people in Afghanistan, a government which at the same time will have good relations with its neighbors.

Papers Laud Position on Rushdie

LD1803163189 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 18, IRNA—The ICO condemnation of Salman Rushdie was top headline news Saturday in Iranian dailies and editorials described the conference as a triumph for the Islamic Republic.

"Declaring Salman Rushdie an apostate by the ICO, a big victory for Iran" screamed the headline in the front page of ETTELA'AT.

The news got the second most prominent headline on the front of the largest daily, KEYHAN, insisting on the "Islamic world's severe reaction to West's cultural aggression and the 'Satanic Verses'".

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, which had been most forceful in demanding action on the affair from the organization splashed a banner headline jubilantly announcing: "Unified stand of 46 governments of Islamic countries against West's conspiracy towards Islamic sanctities."

ABRAR and RESALAT also aggrandized the apostasy ruling.

Meanwhile English-language dailies the TEHRAN TIMES and KEYHAN INTERNATIONAL respectively chose "Iran victorious at ICO against Rushdie blasphbemy" and "ICO meeting condemns Rushdie book" to head their front pages.

Ayatollah Emami Kashani said at Friday prayers that the Islamic foreign ministers in the Riyadh conference had done what all Muslims had expected and that now all member states should carry out the declaration's demands.

The spokesman for the Council of Guardians was leading Friday mass prayer in Tehran.

The press reaction to the ICO appears to show great satisfaction that the the 45 members of the ICO have confirmed Iran's stand that "The Satanic Verses" was a serious affront to Islam.

They also seem delighted that Imam Khomeyni's judgment on the author was not alien to the teachings and beliefs of the entire Islamic world.

"Contrary to what the West expected, the ICO... in support of the leadership and government of the Islamic Republic verified Imam Khomeyni's fatwa [religious decree] (demanding Rushdie's death)... by diplomatic language," said the ABRAR editorial.

Also the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI commented: "This is a source of pride for Islam which could be regarded as a turning point for the ICO and lead it to unity of action in all aspects."

Musavi Denounces ICAO Resolution on Airbus

LD1803174189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Excerpts] In today's cabinet session, the debate on the existing problems and issues at the universities continued in the presence of Mr Seyyed 'Ali Khaneme'i, the president, and the representative of the universities' chancellors. [passage omitted]

The cabinet ratified the proposal regarding the appointment of Mr 'Abbas Reza'i, as governor general of the Chahar Mahall va Bakhtiari Province.

In the course of this session, Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi referred to the ICAO [International Civil Aviation Organization] resolution on the downing of the Iranian Airbus by the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf. The resolution on the downing of the airbus was described as resulting from a few mistakes and as a regrettable incident—another indication of the presence of global arrogance in the decisionmaking bodies of international organizations.

The prime minister stated that if U.S. citizen's nose started to bleed anywhere in the world, those very international organizations and world forums would not ignore the matter. They would issue political resolutions, adopt a position, and denounce the counterarrogance forces and governments as working against the rights of mankind, murderers belonging to the Middle Ages. However, they overlook the massacre of 290 innocent people and the violation of the people's safety by an arrogant force by calling it regrettable.

The prime minister added that discrimination within international organizations is an indication of the implementation of the law of the jungle in these organizations. Our nation strongly renounces such prejudice.

In conclusion, the prime minister reiterated that it is only natural that in such circumstances nations should act independently.

Commentary Assails ICAO's 'Regret'

LD1903220589 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The International Civil Aviation Organization, ICAO, finally after 8 months of discussion on the shooting down of the Iranian Airbus by the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf, put an end to its work without condemning the United States for its flagrant crime. ICAO's weak stance towards the tragic event, in which 290 innocent passengers lost their lives, while being regrettable and calling into question the capability of this international organization in playing an effective role far from exertion of influence by the world arrogant powers, has made the security of the civil flights to the stage with unpredictable risks. [sentence as heard]

The expression of regret by ICAO on the massacre of 290 passengers of the Iranian Airbus can under no circumstances respond to the expectations which millions of airline passengers have towards the security of flights in the world. This worry rightfully exists that noncondemnation of the United States will pave the way for repetition of these kinds of inhumane and violent measures; and this is something which is against the primary objectives of ICAO.

According to the international respected criteria, deployment of weapons against flying civil airplanes is absolutely condemnable. Therefore, one cannot find any logical justification for ICAO's weak stance towards the downfall of the Iranian Airbus. The statement issued by the ICAO has assessed the downfall of the Iranian Airbus with 290 passengers on board, an event arising from several mistakes, and has narrowly expressed regret over it. Such an attitude towards the intentional shooting down of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Airbus is not something new. The U.S. officials at the time of the occurence of the incident, amid their contradictory statements, had made confessions far closer to reality than what ICAO, in the capacity of an international forum and advocating competence, has made in this connection. The U.S. representative has expressed satisfaction over ICAO's decision and has called it a balanced judgment. This indicates the exertion of illegal influence by the United States in the international organization. World nations have the right to closely supervise these kinds of decision-takings with precision and to show necessary sensitivity towards them.

If the international forums like ICAO show so much weakness in the fulfillment of their legal duties, not only they damage their international credibility, but they will (?increase) worries in relation to airliners' safe climbing. Evidently if those individuals who embarked on violent act are not forced to be called to account, they will encourage others to commit similar acts even in more dangerous dimensions. It seems that one cannot find any aware conscience in the world which can ignore realities with such simple nature. The prime minister of the

Islamic Republic of Iran yesterday rightfully raised this issue by saying that if in a part of the world an American had a bleeding nose, the same international organization and world forums would not let the issue go easily, and would issue political statements, adopt stances [word indistinct] and would call the anti-imperialist governments and forces as Middle Ages opponents of human rights and [word indistinct].

However, they easily passed by the massacre of 290 innocent human beings and disruptions in human beings' security and safety by an imperialist power with an expresion of regret. It is clear that such double standard stances, as it has been pointed out by the Islamic Republic of Iran's prime minister, is not acceptable and the world people expect the international forums to perform their duties away from these kinds of discriminatory reactions and away from the influence by the arrogant powers, something that one must say regretfully ICAO failed to do in relations to the shooting down of an Iranian Airbus which inflicted irreparable damage on its international credit and prestige.

Velayati Responds to Iraqi POW Proposal

LD1903112589 Tehran IRNA in English 1120 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 19, IRNA—No agreement could be reached in the stalled Iran-Iraq peace process until Baghdad accepted to withdraw from Iranian soil, Tehran has stressed once again.

Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a message to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar Saturday said no issue including the exchange of war prisoners could be resolved before Iraq gave in on the issue.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to exchange all POW's as soon as possible in the framework of the U.N. Resolution 598 and after the withdrawal of forces to international borders," said Velayati.

He said Iraq repeatedly undertook to implement the resolution but its lack of good will had become clear to the international community.

The POW exchange was one of the major parts of the resolution on which Iran had always stressed when the peace talks first started last August.

"If Iraq had not hindered the progress of the talks and withdrawn its forces as was predicted in the first part of the resolution, all prisoners had by now returned to their families."

Velayati referred to a proposal by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz on March 6, 1989 on exchange of prisoners saying "it was aimed at nothing but to deviate talks from the sketched framework."

Further on Khamene'i's Meeting With Qom Clergy

NC1703175889 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Mar 89 p 4

[Report from Qom by unidentified correspondent]

[Excerpts] Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Khamene'i, president and chairman of the Supreme Council [of the Cultural Revolution], attended a large gathering of theologians and clergymen on Thursday [2 March] at the Imam Husayn 'Asgari Mosque, peace be upon him. He answered questions from the clergymen for 2 hours. [passage omitted]

Asked why the mass media and radio and television are pushing people to seek a comfortable lifestyle and whether he endorses the television programs and foreign series, the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution said: Generally speaking, I do not endorse them. However, I can say that I know some good brothers in some of the programs of the Voice and Vision who are trying to upgrade the quality of the programs. We now see that good progress has been made, especially in radio broadcasts. I oppose some of the television programs, especially the political and economic programs and some of the films, and I think that these should be gradually changed. [passage omitted]

In answer to another question on rumors concerning the possibility of eliminating the position of the prime minister and of reforms in the Constitution, the president said:

There are two viewpoints on this. Some believe in the preservation of the Constitution under the current circumstances and do not consider any reform to be in the interests of the revolution and the country. Another group believes that the Constitution's principles should be preserved but that there should be some reform of management and organization.

Regardiang this same issue, he said: Our Constitution does not make provision for a single director for some of the country's institutions—something which would meet the needs of society. As an example, on the basis of the Constitution, the judiciary has five directors instead of one and the executive has two directors. This has created some practical problems.

President Khamene'i pointed out that it had been proposed that the prime minister's post be eliminated or that the Presidency be merely a ceremonial position with all responsibilities for the country's executive affairs vested in the prime minister.

Continuing his remarks, the president referred to the fact that it is impossible to use foreign loans. He said that instead of foreign loans we can use the cooperation of countries that have developed industries and have had principled positions on the Islamic Republic. He further stated that foreign loans can be useful only when projects are implemented that will produce revenues capable of being used to meet the country's needs, as well as to repay foreign debts. However, in our country, this possibility does not exist, and it is better to cooperate with friendly countries that have technical capabilities to help in the reconstruction of our country.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Khamene'i then explained the situation that existed in the Islamic Republic of Iran when the UN Security Council resolution was accepted. He said: By accepting the resolution, the Islamic Republic proved its goodwill to the world. Now it is continuing its constructive efforts for the implementation of the resolution. However, this does not mean that it should neglect its principled positions and its legal rights.

In answer to a question on the Foreign Ministry's policies, Hojjat ol-Eslam Khamene'i said: In our foreign policy we adopt those positions which are in accordance with our Islamic and revolutionary codes. [passage omitted]

The president then referred to the publication of "The Satanic Verses." He said: I have named this book Satan's Verse. The Islamic Republic displayed the most calculated and principled approach to this book. Those who only impose sanctions on the book are helping to further promotion the book. But when a shot is fired and hits the heart of the author, then all the mercenaries and penpushers will understand what it means to be a mercenary, and if they are being paid, then they should also set some money aside for their coffins.

Majlis Condemns Turkish Policy on Islam

LD2003110789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] During the last Majlis open session of this year, which was held this morning, a letter from more than 150 Majlis deputies, addressed to the Majlis speaker, was read. In the letter the Majlis deputies condemn the policy of the Turkish Government concerning the ban on Islamic dress. They ask the government and the Foreign Ministry to reconsider the quality and level of diplomatic, cultural, and commercial relations with Turkey, in accordance with that country's attitude to Islam and Muslims.

Majlis Ratifies Budget for Coming Year

LD2003130689 Tehran IRNA in English 1020 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—Iran's nearly dlrs 140 billion budget for the Iranian year starting Tuesday, was ratified by the Majlis and the Council of Guardians Monday after 12 days and nights of debate. The budget for the year 1368 amounts to rials 9,782.705 billion (dlrs 139.75 bn).

Khomeyni Reportedly Ordered Recent Executions

*TA1703172389 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio
in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 89*

[Text] Citing informed circles in Tehran, our fellow strugglers have reported that the order for the mass execution of political prisoners, which resulted in the murder of several thousand political prisoners recently, was issued by Ruhollah Khomeyni himself.

Informed persons in Tehran say that Ruhollah Khomeyni did not consult anyone on this matter. After the start of the executions, when some of the regime's high-ranking officials protested this decision, he paid no attention to their recommendations or views.

Concessions Made for Saudi Support Over 'Verses'

TA2003105689 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Excerpt] It is being said in informed circles in Tehran that in return for Saudi Arabia's consent that the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] boycott Salman Rushdie's book, the Islamic Republic was forced to make three large concessions to Saudi Arabia.

First, the Islamic Republic will forgo compensation from Saudi Arabia. Previously, Saudi Arabia had intended to pay $200 million to the families of the Iranian pilgrims who were killed [in July 1987 Mecca rioting].

The second concession that the Islamic Republic regime was forced to make to Saudi Arabia was to accept the quota of 50,000 pilgrims set by Saudi Arabia to visit Mecca.

Finally, in a humiliating gesture, the leaders of the Islamic Republic regime had to agree not stage any political demonstrations at all during the hajj and to hold only religious ceremonies, as Saudi Arabia stipulated. [passage omitted]

Maldives

Coup Plotters' Trial Begins; Tamil Trial Later

BK2003085489 Hong Kong AFP in English 0806 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 20 (AFP)—The trial of four Maldivians accused of leading an armed coup against the government has begun, but 68 foreign suspects are to be tried later, Maldivian officials said Monday.

Abdul Hameed, high court administrator of the Indian Ocean atoll nation, said the cases against four Maldivians began on Thursday and two more will go on trial separately Tuesday.

Mr. Hameed, contacted by telephone from here, said 68 Sri Lankan Tamils suspected of involvement in the November 3 armed attempt to overthrow President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom will be tried later, but no date had been fixed yet.

Alleged coup leader Abdullah Lutfi and three of his colleagues were unrepresented by lawyers when their cases began on Thursday, Mr. Hameed said.

He could not immediately give details of the proceedings, which were conducted in Dhivehi, the national language.

At least 12 Maldivians were killed in the coup attempt which was put down after Mr. Gayoom requested and secured military aid from neighbouring India.

President Gayoom has accused Tamil mercenaries belonging to a Sri Lankan Tamil militant group, the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), of carrying out the armed invasion of Male, the tiny capital island.

Nepal

Position on 'Zone of Peace' Proposal Reviewed

BK1103063789 Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English 25 Feb 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Commitment To Peace"]

[Text] Nepal's commitment to peace both at home and in all regions of the world has been amply demonstrated by various initiatives it has taken for the cause of peace time and again. It was with this concern for peace that His Majesty the King in February 25, 1975 made a landmark proposal for Nepal to be declared a Zone of Peace [ZOP]. This day, February 25, therefore, is cherished by all Nepalese as an important and significant day in the annals of Nepalese history. Nepal firmly believes that rapid development can be achieved only in an atmosphere of peace and stability. It is with this belief in mind that Nepal has determinedly supported such proposals in different parts of the world and is seeking support for its own. It is indeed very heartening to see the number of countries supporting Nepal's Zone of Peace proposal growing day by day. The number of nations supporting the ZOP proposal reached the century mark when Norway became the one hundredth nation to support this proposal on December 19, 1988. The total number of nations now supporting the ZOP proposal has reached 106, which is more than two thirds of the total number of United Nations members. While one rejoices at the sheer number of countries that have endorsed the ZOP proposal, one should also not overlook the significance of the diversity of the nations from all continents that have supported this proposal. Countries developed and developing, countries from the North and from the South, countries aligned and non-aligned, countries from near and countries from far and countries with different political, social and cultural thoughts and practices have fully supported this peace proposition of Nepal. However, two close neighbouring countries, India and Bhutan, which both belong to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to which Nepal also belongs, have yet to endorse Nepal's Zone of Peace proposal. Similiarly the Soviet Union has also not supported this peace proposal, this being the only one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council yet to lend support to the ZOP proposal. It will not be untimely to say now, even after such a big majority of nations have expressed their support to Nepal, that diplomatic efforts must continue as enthusiastically as before to win over the support of the remaining countries, to join in with the majority that have so rightly endorsed Nepal's sacred proposition for peace.

Nepal's total commitment to peace, not only at home but in all parts of the world can be visibly reflected in its active participation for the cause of peace on various occasions. Therefore, the long association, which Nepal has had with the United Nations in its various peace keeping activities in different regions, including the present United Nation's peace keeping force in Lebanon, is ample proof that Nepal had done all it can for the preservation of peace and is still doing so with total dedication. Nepal's peace initiatives in all parts of the world and its sagacious Zone of Peace proposal all indicate the high priority Nepal has accorded to peace without which it believes that development cannot take place. So as we strive for development in the country and even as so many countries of the world are supporting the Zone of Peace proposal, we should all solemnly rededicate ourselves for the cause of peace at home and in all parts of the world.

Pakistan

National Assembly Summoned To Meet 22 Mar

BK1803114289 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The National Assembly has been summoned to meet in Islamabad on Wednesday [22 March] at 1715. It has been summoned by the acting speaker of the National Assembly in exercise of the powers conferred by the Constitution.

Outbreak of Violence in Karachi; Curfew Imposed

Death Toll Reaches 26

BK1803155789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In Karachi, a fresh outbreak of violence claimed 26 lives today. Unidentified gunmen driving through a Karachi suburb shot dead 12 persons and injured 1. They are reported to have opened fire indiscriminately from a car as people were going to work this morning. The dead include Pathans and Muhajirs. A massive search is on for the culprits.

Clashes between rival ethnic groups in the city claimed 14 lives today. Eyewitnesses said several people were injured. A curfew has been imposed in some areas of Karachi to prevent further trouble.

Press Note Released

BK1903023089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] A press note issued last night by the commissioner of Karachi stated that eight persons succumbed to injuries sustained during violent incidents on Friday night [17 March] in Malir and Malir Extension Colony police station areas despite massive police patrolling there. Eight others who were also injured during the violence remain in satisfactory condition.

In another incident, a person was shot during curfew hours in Shah Faisal Colony police station area and later died.

The press note said that a curfew has been imposed effective immediately on the Malir police station area, Malir Extension areas, and Malir city. The curfew restrictions will be relaxed in Shah Faisal Colony, Model Colony, Malir, Malir Extension, and Malir city from 0700 to 0900 and again from 1500 to 1700 today.

Bhutto on 'Regrettable' Incidents

BK1903154989 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The prime minister has said that the recent regrettable incidents in Karachi are part of a well thought-out plan to disrupt law and order in the [Sind] province. Talking to newsmen at Karachi Airport before leaving for Islamabad, she said these incidents have caused heavy losses and the government will take appropriate steps to end the lawlessness. The prime minister said she is deeply saddened by the killing of innocent people. Ms Benazir Bhutto said the concerned departments of the provincial government have failed to provide advance information to the government. The chief minister is reviewing the situation as there appears to be an immediate need to take a fresh look at the entire system of the official machinery, including intelligence and other organizations.

The prime minister said the recent incidents are a stratagem of those persons who carry out sneak attacks and avoid identifiction. She said it is necessary for people living in different areas to unite in order to identify those persons involved in such activities. [passage omitted]

Soviet Allegations on Afghan Events Dismissed

BK1803164489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Pakistan deplores the statement made by the Soviet first deputy foreign minister and ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr Yuliy Vorontsov, in Kabul last Thursday [16 March]. The statement contains the repetition of completely baseless allegations against Pakistan, in particular that Pakistan troops were fighting on Afghan soil and Pakistan officers were directing the mujahidin. These allegations are totally without foundation.

A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that the Soviet envoy's description of the current situation as a beginning of Pakistan-Afghanistan war is particularly uncalled for and is a matter of concern. He said the Pakistan Government remains resolutely committed to the Geneva accords which have paved the way for a comprehensive settlement of the Afghan problem based on the restoration of the rights of self-determination to the Afghan people.

The spokesman pointed that the representative Afghan Consultative Council established an interim Afghan government on the 24th of last month and was invited to occupy the vacant Afghan seat at the just concluded Islamic Conference Organization's foreign ministers meeting in Riyadh. It is clear that the only way to bring an early end to the bloodshed and sufferings in Afghanistan is to transfer power to the representatives of the Afghan people. Unfortunately, the Soviet ambassador has seen fit to dismiss the interim government as an alliance of what he calls Pakistan-based rebels. This statement along with the resumption of Soviet military supplies to the Soviet-backed regime—in addition to the massive arsenal handed over to them by the Soviet forces before completing their withdrawal on February the 15th—causes genuine doubts about the professed desire for peace expressed by the Soviet envoy.

The Pakistan Government earnestly hopes that instead of reiterating baseless allegations against Pakistan and suggesting proposals that had been repeatedly rejected by the Afghan people and the mujahidin, all parties will respect the will of the Afghan people.

PPP Hosts Reception for CPC Group in Sukkur

BK1703050089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The Sukkur city and district wing of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] hosted a reception in honor of the visiting six-member CPC delegation in Sukkur yesterday. Speaking on the occasion, the PRC delegation leader Xian Huanghua paid rich tribute to late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Chairman Mao Zedong, and Zhou Enlai for laying the foundation of close and friendly relations between Pakistan and China. He said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's recent visit to China has further consolidated relations. Today, close relations exist not only between the two governments, but also between the PPP and the CPC at the people's level. We are paying this visit at the invitation of the PPP, the Chinese delegation leader added. The PPP's general secretary, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, was among those who spoke on the occasion.

Officials Seize 900 kg of Hashish; 4 Arrested

BK1903130689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1257 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Karachi, March 19 (AFP)—Customs officials seized nearly 900 kilograms (about 2,000 pounds) of contraband hashish at the airport here destined for The Netherlands concealed in smugglers' jogging suits, officials said. Four people allegedly involved in the smuggling racket were simultaneously arrested in the Dutch city of Rotterdam, customs officials here said. Pakistani and Dutch anti-drug authorities coordinated efforts in uncovering the racket, sources added. Two Africans—a

Kenyan and a Tanzanian—were arrested at the airport here Friday in another case of attempting smuggling, involving heroin powder, sources said.

According to official records, 62,000 kilograms (135,000 pounds) of cannabis has been seized in different operations here in the last 10 weeks. The largest haul of cannabis was made in the city on December 27, when a cache of about 36,000 kilograms (80,000 pounds) of contraband was seized.

The government has stepped up its anti-drugs drive since Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto assumed office in November, observers noted.

Sri Lanka

Suspension of Israeli Interest Section Urged

BK1903133489 Hong Kong AFP in English 1313 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 19 (AFP)—The speaker of Sri Lanka's Parliament has called for suspension of the Israeli Interests Section in Colombo until a settlement is reached over the Palestinian issue.

Addressing a meeting at the Sri Lanka Islamic Centre here Saturday to congratulate the Palestinian state proclaimed late last year, Speaker Mohammad Haniffa Mohammad also condemned the "genocide" of Palestinian people in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He said Israel had repeatedly rejected peace overtures by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasir 'Arafat.

Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said Sri Lanka, which was one of the first countries to recognise the Palestinian state, would continue to extend support to Palestine.

The ambassador of the Palestinian state to Colombo, 'Umar Abu Rashid, thanked the Sri Lankan Government for its moral support for the Palestinian cause.

Israel opened an interests section at the U.S. Embassy here in 1984 after the Sri Lankan Government sought Israeli assistance to develop its intelligence machinery to counter ethnic strife in the island.

Sri Lanka's Muslim population of 1.5 million had protested against the opening of the interest section. There have been repeated demands for its closure by Muslim leaders.

Northeastern Officials Seek Talks With LTTE

BK1903095489 Hong Kong AFP in English 0935 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 19 (AFP)—A former Tamil militant group now controlling Sri Lanka's North Eastern Province is to send a representative to London to initiate peace talks with a rival Tamil group, a spokesman said Sunday.

Provincial Finance Minister Periyathambi Kirupakaran told a press conference here that a Central Committee member of his Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) would visit London shortly to hold talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the most powerful militant group.

He said the EPRLF representative, whom he refused to name for security reasons, would hold talks with Anton Balasingham, the LTTE theorist, in a bid to bring the group into the political mainstream. The EPRLF, a former militant group, controls the administration of the Tamil-majority North Eastern Province.

"It is the responsibility of the LTTE leadership to decide whether or not to join the democratic framework," Mr. Kirupakaran said.

The LTTE has been waging a bloody bush-war against some 45,000 to 50,000 Indian troops stationed in the north and east under a 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan peace pact aimed at ending the Tamil separatist campaign. The LTTE has rejected the pact, which has been accepted by the EPRLF and other former Tamil militant groups.

Asked if the EPRLF would support the LTTE's demand for a ceasefire by the Indian troops Mr. Kirupakaran said: "The request for an unconditional ceasefire by the IPKF (Indian Peace Keeping Force) will not help anybody." On two previous occasions, the LTTE had used ceasefires to strengthen itself militarily, according to reports.

Mr. Kirupakaran said the provincial police chief had called a meeting of all Tamil groups, including the LTTE, in Trincomalee on March 27 to "discuss the problem of people without uniforms carrying arms."

He said only the Civil Volunteer Force, a provincial militia, would be allowed to carry arms and added that it would be deployed to prevent attacks on Sinhalese civilians living along the boundaries of the northeastern region. Such attacks, blamed on the LTTE, had left nearly 100 people dead in February.

He strongly denied press reports quoting police as saying that the EPRLF was involved in the massacre of 36 Sinhalese at Dutuwea village in the north-central Anuradhapura District on February 13 and that two of those arrested in connection with the killings were members of the group.

Mr. Kirupakaran accused some sections of the national press of publishing "false and irresponsible propaganda" and maintained that the EPRLF had never killed or intimated members of the country's Sinhalese majority population.

Provincial Councillor Shot Dead Near Colombo

BK2003093189 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0735 GMT 20 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 20 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Three policemen were killed when subversives exploded a remote controlled landmine under a police jeep late last night at Eppawala in the North Central Province. Police told LANKAPUVATH that the victims were two constables of the regular police force and a reservist. Police said the incident occurred at 2230 hours (local time) yesterday when the police mobile patrol, comprising two jeeps were passing the village of Palugaswewa on the Anuradhapura-Talawa Road.

The landmine which was buried under a culvert exploded under the lead jeep. One constable died on the spot and five others injured died at the Anuradhapura Hospital.

Police told LANKAPUVATH that in another incident, Ranjith Wickramaratne, a United National Party member of the Western Provincial Council who was attending a prize giving [ceremony] last evening at St. Johns Boswe School at Hanwella, 40 kilometres east of Colombo, and Sarath Jayasuriya were killed when subversive gunmen opened fire with T-56 rifles and FNC [Fabrique Nationale Carbine—a light assault rifle] carbines.

Three of the others in the subversives attack [words indistinct] injured later succumbed to their injuries at the Colombo South Hospital. Police said the incident occured at 1730 hours (local time) yesterday. Twelve T-56 and 2 FNC empty casings were found at the scene of the massacre.

1,208 'Subversive' Suspects Detained This Week

BK1803120889 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1140 GMT 18 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 18 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Seven subversives, who had participated in the 1971 insurgency, are among 183 persons being questioned by the security forces in the Southern Province.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH today that a total of 1,208 suspected subversives had been taken into custody during security force operations this week in the Southern Province towns of Maliduwa, Akuressa, Kamburupitiya, Weligama, Gandara, Nilwella, Kottegoda, Hapugama, Wauwa, and Mirissa.

Suspects, who after screening were found not involved in subversive activities, were released, the sources said.

They said that three locally made revolvers, glass and other splinters used in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices had been seized.

Meanwhile, several subversives were wounded, when security guards counter attacked effectively, as insurgents opened fire in an abortive attempt to raid the home of a southern provincial councillor at Elpitiya in the Galle District. Official sources said that the subversives had left behind a submachinegun as they fled.

Opposition Sees Disaster From Proposed Budget

BK1803063289 Hong Kong AFP in English 0622 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 18 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's main opposition leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike said Saturday the government's budget for 1989 was a "new hoax" and charged that it will push the country into economic disaster.

Mrs. Bandaranaike, a former prime minister, said that balance of payment figures, the state of the economy and other vital economic indicators were excluded from the budget presented in Parliament Thursday.

"What we have witnessed is not just a bad vision and a raw deal but a new hoax. What is the government trying to hide from the people?" Mrs. Bandaranaike said in a statement saturday.

Prime Minister Dingiri Banda Wijetunga presented the budget for fiscal 1989 Thursday with an unprecedented 1.6 billion dollar deficit and unveiled a package of proposals increasing personal taxes and raising duties on luxury merchandise.

Mr. Wijetunga, who is also the finance minister, made a brief budget speech in contrast to previous finance ministers who took several hours to detail the state of the economy and prospects.

"The opposition will show how the amateurish approach of the government will push the country towards economic disaster," Mrs. Bandaranaike said.

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